

LETTERS
FROM THE 93
MARCHIONESS
DE SÉVIGNE,

TO HER DAUGHTER

Madame de Sévigné

Countess DE GRIGNAN.

Translated from the FRENCH of the last PARIS
EDITION.

VOLUME THE NINTH.

She strikes each point with native force of mind,
While puzzled learning blunders far behind.
Graceful to sight, and elegant to thought,
The great are vanquish'd, and the wise are taught.
Her breeding finish'd, and her temper sweet ;
When serious, easy ; and when gay, discreet ;
In glitt'ring scenes o'er her own heart severe,
In crowds collected, and in courts sincere. *Young.*



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LETTERS

THE MONTHLY

MANAGEMENT

DEPARTMENT



FOR THE ENGLISH READER

BY A. J. DE MELLO

CONSIDERATIONS ON

THE STATE OF THE ENGLISH

CONSTITUTION

BY A. J. DE MELLO

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MARCHIONESS
DE SEVIGNE

LETTERS
OF THE
MARCHIONESS DE SEVIGNE.

LETTER DCXXVII.

To Madame De GRIGNAN.

Paris, Friday December 10, 1683.

CAN NOT answer your letters to-day, as they came so very late, and I answer two of a Monday. The Marquis is somewhat rustic, but not enough to render him ridiculous ; he will not have such a shape as his father, nor is it to be imagined ; in other respects he is very agreeable, answering pertinently every thing that is asked him, and like a man of sense who is willing to gain instruction at his country seat : all his discourse is tinctured with such modesty and truth as charm us. M. Duplessis is very worthy of that esteem you entertain for him. We eat all together very socially, amusing ourselves with the unjust proceedings we sometimes undertake against one another ; make yourself easy upon this score, and think no more about them ; let it be my part to blush at thinking that a *petit-king* is a heavy burthen ; I own I am greatly afflicted at it, but we must submit to the great justice of paying our debts, which no one understands better than yourself ; you have also goodness enough to believe that I am not naturally avaricious, and that I have no design of amassing any thing. When you are here, my dear Madam, you tutor your son so well, that I am compelled to ad-

mine you; but, in your absence, I undertake to teach him the common rules of conversation, which it is essential to know; there are some things absolutely necessary to be known. It would be ridiculous to appear astonished at certain pieces of news upon which we reason; I am sufficiently acquainted with these bagatelles. I also strongly recommend to him the attention necessary to be paid to the discourse of others, and that presence of mind by which we quickly comprehend and answer; this is a very capital object in the intercourse of the world. I relate to him prodigies of this kind, which Dangeau related to us the other day; he admires them, and I lay a great stress upon the agreeableness and even the utility of this kind of vivacity. In a word, I obtain the Chevalier's approbation: we converse together about reading, and the misfortune of being afflicted with weariness and want of employment: we call this the laziness of the mind, which deprives us of relishing good books, and even romances; these matters greatly interest us, and he frequently enters upon them. Little Auvergne* is very fond of reading; he was never easy when with the army, unless he had a book in his hand. God knows whether M. Duplessis and we can turn this fine and noble passion to any account; we are willing to believe the Marquis susceptible of the best impressions; we let nothing be neglected, that may, at least, tend to inspire him with so considerable a taste. The Chevalier is more useful to this little boy, than can be well imagined; he is ever touching the capital chords of honour and reputation, and takes such care of his affairs, as you cannot fail thanking him for: he engages in every thing, attends to the minutiae, and is desirous that the Marquis should regulate his own accounts, and make no superfluous expences; thus he endeavours to give him a taste for regularity and economy, and to make him lay aside that air of grandeur which considers such attention

* Francis-Egen de la Tour, Prince of Auvergne, who quitted the French army in 1702, in which year he had in Germany, to enter into the Imperial service.



tion as mean, and which is the direct path to every kind of injustice, and at length the Alms-house: can there be any consideration so strong as that of training your son in these principles? For my part, I acknowledge I am charmed with it, and think this kind of education is far more noble than any other. The Chevalier is a little afflicted with the gout: he will go to-morrow if he can to Versailles, and he will acquaint you with the situation of his affairs. You already know that you are Knight of the order, which is a very desirable thing in the centre of your province, and in actual service; it will highly become M^r de Grignan's fine figure: there will, however, be no one to dispute it with him in Provence, for he will not be envied by his uncle *, as this title does not go out of the family.

La Fayette is just gone from hence; he has been holding forth a full hour about one of the little Marquis's friends; he has related so many ridiculous things of him, that the Chevalier thinks himself obliged to speak about it to his father, who is his friend; he thanked La Fayette very obligingly for his intelligence, for in fact there is nothing of so much consequence as being in good company, and it often happens that without being ridiculous, we are ridiculed by those we are with: make yourself easy upon this head, the Chevalier will set matters right. I shall be very much chagrined, if he cannot present his nephew on Sunday; this same gout is a great drawback upon happiness. With respect to Paulina, can you, my daughter, imagine that she should be perfect? She is not of an easy temper in her own apartment; there are many people much esteemed and cherished, who have the very same defect: I suppose it would be easy for you to correct her of this fault; but take particular care not to scold and humiliate her. I am constantly intreated by all my friends to present their respects and compliments to you: Madame de Lavardin called upon me yesterday to tell

* The Archbishop of Arles was commander of the Royal Orders of Knighthood.

me she esteemed you too much to pay you a compliment; but that she embraced you with all her heart, and the great Count de Grignan: these were her expressions.

I am going to acquaint you with a fact: Madame de Brinon, the very soul of St. Cyr, and the intimate friend of Madame de Maintenon, is no longer at St. Cyr; she quitted that place four days ago: Madame de Han—, who loves her, brought her back to the Hotel de Guise, where she still remains. There does not seem to be any misunderstanding between her and Madame Maintenon, for she sends every day to inquire after her health; this the more increases our curiosity to know the subject of her disgrace. Every body is whispering about it, without any one knowing more: if this affair should be cleared up, I will acquaint you with the circumstances.

LETTER DCXXVIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday December 13, 1688.

I THOUGHT I could never be pleased without seeing M. de Grignan on New-year's day; it is nevertheless certain that the Chevalier and me are very easy about the King's permission for not coming. You will do like other absent people, and take your blue ribbon when you are bid; but I believe you will be obliged to come here to complete the ceremony of knighthood in the course of next year; take the collar and oath, and thereby go through the whole instalment, to avoid reproach. Thus we reason, but it is only in perspective. Your son was yesterday at Versailles with M. Duplefisis: it is a pity the Chevalier could not bring him here; he is, however, pretty well in his chair, which I was obliged to keep yesterday. Neither Turi, Amelot, Du Bellai, nor any other male creature tormented me; but on a sudden entered the Duchess of Elbeuf *, and her cousin Madame le Cogneux; I trembled lest the Chevalier should have

* Frances de Montault, daughter to Philip de Montault, Duke of Navilles, Peer and Marshal of France.

have been angry, but he was not so in the least: she was so lively and clever for half an hour, that he was charmed with her. To return to the little Marquis, think not that we were not affected to see this child return, without finding you at the same place where he left you; I have not told you what I felt, and what I knew you suffered; this, I think, I was in the right not to dwell upon. If you had seen the violent contortion of his sword, and the weight of the piece of shell that bent it upon his haunch, you would certainly think he was very fortunate, and that Providence was pleased so visibly to interpose in his preservation; you would adore that Omnipotent hand that so timely interposed for you and for us all; for we have indeed a very great affection for this little captain. Soleri had informed us that you had been employed about this company; but what you acquaint us with is still more pleasant and agreeable every time we read it: this diversion has done you good. Be not in pain about your child's heath; he has neither been bled nor taken physic—nothing of all this was necessary: he has a good appetite, sleeps soundly, has a regular pulse, and is very vigorous even in fatigues; this is what the faculty might deprive him of, were we to put him into their hands. As to Sanzei, he is returned, after being often in the trenches; he did not confine himself to the meer rules of a musqueteer; he eat with *Monseigneur*, and why not? M. de Beauvillier did him this pleasure at last, that no consequence might be drawn from it. Madame de Bagnols, who is quite pale and thin, gives us with a gentle languor, often accompanied with tears, an account of the cruel and mortal disorder of her friend, whom she imagines was killed by a physician. Madame de Coulanges is pretty negligent, and very quiet. The Abbe Tetu is troubled with the vapours, which he communicates to all his friends; his disorder is occasioned by the want of sleep, which surpasses all bounds. I go to the mass of the community; the ladies of eleven o'clock have the penance to go through of hearing the Prior, who always continues an hour; and I sometimes go to the Duchess of Lude's, who serds you a thousand kind compliments: send

some answer that I can shew her. Madame de Saint Germain, Madame de Villais, Madame d'Elbeuf, besides a thousand others whom I forget, do the same. I refused going on Wednesday to sup with the Duchess of Villeroi, being willing to bid adieu to Soleri, and on Thursday I would not go to the Duchess du Lude's, because it rained violently: on Friday I went with her to eat new laid eggs at Madame Coulanges. You see I acquaint you with all my little pursuits; I like you should know even these trifles, it in a manner brings us together. I often see the Chevalier; that chamber * is very attracting; I cannot say so much of Lameri, though we agree very well together. You are very pleasant about this coadjutor; he has a gaiety about him that sits very easy, and he seems to be attached to you as well as M. de Carcassonne—have they not indeed reason to love you passionately? what have you not done for them, for their name, for their family? entirely yielded, devoted, and ruined, torn from your family, absent from your mother—and wherefore?—because you communicated some of your sentiments. I wear your livery, and you love me.

My God! my dear child, what fools your women are both alive and dead! that interment † shocks me! what a profanation! it smells of Paganism. It would make me shudder at the thoughts of dying in Provence; I would, at least, be assured that the milliner and plumber were not sent for at the same time. Yes, truly—but no more of this.

The affairs of England cannot be worse, and your lady seems as if she would not come into play in a hurry. I will send you the sheet of the good Bigorre. Corbinelli is greatly elated with your civilities; but do not kill yourself with answering them, for it would be too arduous a task. Reflect that I have only you, and this my only letter, *pago lei, pago il mendo*. Madame de Chaulnes desires to be kindly remembered
to

* This was Madame de Grignan's chamber.

† It was a custom in Provence to inter the dead with their faces uncovered; those women who dressed their heads with ribbons, preserved them in their coffins.

to you, but no compliments for reasons that are too obvious. M. de Chaulnes writes very pleasantly, he narrowly escaped being drowned in going from Brest to Belleisle. He is at present at Rennes; I am always greatly obliged to him. I saw *Mademoiselle* with the Duchess de Lesdiguières: the Princess says, that she will write to you: what the Duke says is very right, particularly with regard to M. de Grignan.

I have had no news yet of Madame de Brinon, unless it be, that the king has bestowed a pension of 2000 crowns a year upon her; it is said that she will be one of the sisters of the Convent of St. Anthony. She preached very well you know. The good Gobelain * is to succeed her, who, to fill both places, will be obliged to preach all day long. Truly, this folly, with which you acquaint me, of your preacher, could never be believed, though it has been reported a long while, *The good papa Adam, and the cruel mamma Eve.*—It is beyond all ridicule.

You should not be ashamed of retrenching the expences of your table, since the King, after the example of his great huntsman †, has retrenched those of Marli; there is now no other than the ladies. Madame de Leuville the elder told me she no longer gave suppers: in a word, we have many examples before us.

The K. of E. is returned to London, abandoned by those whom he thought the most faithfully attached to him: he was seized with a violent bleeding at the nose: if he had went whither he had intended, he would have been delivered up to the Prince of Orange.

He has been compelled to promise calling a free parliament next month, which it is said will be his certain ruin His kinsman, the Prince of Denmark, and his other daughter §, who is a second Tully, and whom I shall call the Princess of Denmark, are gone

* Confessor of St. Cyr.

† M. de la Rochefoucault.

§ Ann Stuart, wife to Prince George of Denmark, Queen of England, after the death of William III. her brother-in-law.

to join that pest the P. of O. It is said that the little Prince † is not at Portsmouth, where he was supposed to be besieged ; his flight will one day make an excellent romance. It is not doubted but the King his father will fly as well as him. Thus the Prince of Orange is, in all probability, master, and protector, and perhaps, he will soon be worse, unless a miracle takes place. These are the reports at three o'clock, perhaps the Abbe Bigorre will know more at night.

LETTER DCXXIX.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday December 15, 1688.

HERE I am planted by my fire-side, with a little table before me, working hard these two hours to finish my letters of businels for Britanny ; a letter to my son, which I send back to M. de Chaulnes for news, as he is at Rennes ; and now I am going to unbend my mind, and refresh my head with a letter to my dear child. It is absolutely pastime when I write to you, and the more so, as our little hero, who has no poetic vein, is returning from Versailles, and will take up the pen when I desire him, to relate his actions and the motions of the court, in the same manner as Fame has trumpeted forth those of Philippsburg and Manheim.

I much approve of the answer which you wish the Dauphin had made to M. de Montausier's letter : this would have been complete, and worthy of the hero. A medal is handed about with an inscription of our enemies : it represents a young eagle armed with a thunder-bolt, and the legend is this line of Horace :

Cælo tonantem credidimus Jovem.

With respect to mourning for poor St. Aubin, I can add nothing to what you have said upon it, but your taking it in so distant a place, and where this poor lad was so little known. You are too good, and M. de Grignan too worthy : you will not fail to quit it at least upon New-year's day ; the Prince de Conti does not mourn any longer for Madame de Sanzei ; and M. de la Trousse does the same. I find that communions

are

† James Francis Edward, born June 20 of the same year.

MARCHIONESS DE SEVIGNE. 11

are somewhat frequent in Provence; to my shame be it spoken, I have left the immaculate conception of the mother, in order to preserve myself entire for the nativity of the son; it is true, we cannot prepare ourselves too much for it. But here comes the Marquis, and I begin to sing,

Le heros que j'attends, ne reviendra-t-il-pas?

Where's my expected hero—will he not return?

Here then he is with my pen in his hand.

The Marquis de Grignan.

I am, Madam, just returned from Versailles, whither I went on Sunday; I immediately waited on the Marshal de Lorges, to desire him to present me to the King; which he promised, and appointed to meet me at the door of Madame de Maintenon's apartment, to salute him upon his return. I accordingly saluted him, he stopt, nodded his head, and smiled. The next day I saluted the Dauphin, the Dauphiness, *Monsieur, Madame*, and the other Princes of the blood, in their respective apartments, and I every where met with a gracious reception. I dined with Madame d'Armagnac, who paid me a thousand civilities, and entreated me to pay her compliments to you. From thence I went to M. de Montausier's, where I staid till the play began. Andromache was represented, and was quite a novelty to me; judge, Madam, of the pleasure it gave me. At night I went to the supper, and the couchee; and the next day, which was yesterday, to the levees: I was this morning at the levees; after which, M. de la Trousse conducted me to M. de Louvois, who bid me have an eye to my company. I told him it was complete; to which Madame de la Trousse added, it was a very fine one. Thus, Madam, have I given you an exact account of what passed at Versailles. Permit me, in looking at your picture, to feelingly lament, that I cannot throw myself at the feet of the original, kiss her dear hands, and aspire at her cheek.

LET.

LETTER DCXXX.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday December 17, 1688.

I HAVE been ever since morning about this letter, and I shall finish it at night, if the post-boy thinks proper to come in at a reasonable hour: in a word, I shall imitate the Chevalier. We have a peculiar desire of seeing your answer concerning the blue ribbon, the surprise of which must certainly be agreeable to you. We find there are none but you who upon this occasion are distinguished for the command of the provinces; * for the brother of a lady of honour at Menin, an ambassador, had pretensions beyond you. The other commanders are warriors, and all others are quite forgotten. But, my dear lady, how distant we are from each other! a whole fortnight have we expected this answer. M. de Lamoignon is going to pass the holidays at Bayeux; he carried me last night to sup with him at the Chevalier's. M. de Amelot, who is returned from Portugal, is going into Switzerland, without having time to breathe; Coulanges was there; your health was drank all round, not without regretting your absence; they are far from forgetting you here, even if I were not present. The Duchess of Lude is somewhat indisposed; she is troubled with a vomiting; she keeps her chamber, and is incessantly speaking of you. Madame de Coulanges, and the *divine*, are employed in diverting the Abbe de Tetu's vapours, which are very strong, and deprive him of all sleep; M. du Bois, who is a very skilful physician, also prescribes for the Abbe; he returns you a thousand kind thanks for your obliging remembrance of him. I was yesterday repaying in our neighbourhood the many visits I had received, upon the score of your knighthood; among others was M. de Richebourg, who adores you, and Madame de Maisons, who is quite a Grignan. The Marquis had been with her, and had entertained her very

* The Count de Grignan, Lieutenant-general in the government of Provence and the King's army, did not serve after the year 1670, except upon the frontiers, where he commanded in the absence of M. de Vendome.

very well ; he is very polite, and I am sorry you did not see him.

The Chevalier is much embarrassed with his elevated reputation ; he is summoned as a witness of lives and manners, and his friends think he honours them with his attention. He crawled yesterday to M. de Paris's, when he told him he had made an effort to come before him, in order to disabuse the world concerning the false reports about M. de Beauvillier ; he raised his hand, and seriously said what he thought ; but his hand could not wipe away his tears. He intends performing the like office on Sunday for M. de Dangeau. He will to-night acquaint you with all he has to do. I always recur to the maxim, *whatever is good, is good* ; according to this balance, no one loses or gains : all people are made acquainted with themselves, which does not a little embarrass many. Songs and lampoons fly about in plenty, but I pay no attention to them ; however, I must tell you what the Countess said out a loud at Mademoiselle's the other day.

§ *Le Roi, dont la bonte le met a mille epreuves,*
Pour soulager les Chevaliers nouveaux
En a dispense vingt de porter des manteaux,
Et trente de faire leurs preuves.

This is all very well. Madame de Vaubecourt, like you, has triumphantly carried her cause. M. de Broglio has superseded la Troussie in the command of Languedoc ; but it is expected his predecessor will be better provided for : the expence he made in this province will not a little hurt his successor. My dear, I am relating to you trifles, I leave objects of importance to the Chevalier's pen. I am contented at being as sensibly affected as himself at every thing that relates to you, to discourse with him in his chamber by his fireside about you, to wish that your Avignon business may turn out well, and that your journey may be useful. Such a report was spread the day before yesterday, just

§ The King, whose goodness exposes him to a thousand trials, to ease the new Knights, has granted a dispensation whereby twenty may lay aside their cloaks, and thirty their prowess.

as I was concluding my letter, that I could not tell you half what I had to say to you; and it is lucky that I love you three days successively, in order to resume the thread of my discourse upon the same subject.

The Duke de Coissin is come again to desire the Chevalier to be a witness for him, and likewise the Bishop of Orleans *: in a word, his approbation is a thing that must be obtained at all events. It will not be surprising to see next month two knights of the blue ribbon sitting together: such encounters will be very common. This is enough till night. You are not mistaken with respect to Sappho's † poetry, your taste is just, and will always be so; mine also must be very strong to love and esteem you as I do.

I am just returned from the city. I have been to thank Madame de Meckelbourg for her civilities, and Madame d'Elbeuf for her visit: you drew upon me these obligations. I have no news. The affairs in England do not daily change their face. Your letters are not yet arrived. As you find my affection for you does not vary between Wednesday and Friday, neither does it between morning and night: so, my dear child, I am entirely your's, and I conjure you constantly to love me as you do.

Ah!—here is your letter come of the 10th. I acknowledge I impatiently expected it, and was desirous of knowing, if your joy and sentiments kept pace with our's; I thank God, I find them exactly alike. Indeed, you should be contented; all the compliments that are paid you are of such a kind, that they should please and flatter you. Madame de Lavardin says, that she loves you too well to say any thing in form. In a word, all the world, whether speaking or silent, are on your side. You are mistaken if you think the promotion is laid aside; every thing is in as much agitation as ever, and English matters afford only a slight diversion; the nearer the ceremony approaches, the preparations are the stronger. M. de Charot arrived, and he was ordered to depart twenty leagues from hence. All who command in the provinces will not

return:

* Peter de Cambout de Coissin, Bishop of Orleans, then first Almoner to the King, afterwards Cardinal and great Almoner of France.

† Mdaemoiselle de Scuderi.

return: judge then if the most distant, and the only one in Provence will return; make yourself easy, the favour is complete. However tiresome my kinsman's compliments may be, I should be very sorry I assure you to be in Britanny; I have had too much pleasure from all that I have heard and seen with respect to this business. I accept your compliments, my dear Countess, and you cannot be more interested than myself.

LETTER DCXXXI.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday December 20, 1688.

IS it possible, my dearest, that I should write well, I do it so fast; but since you are contented, I desire no more. You will, with a little patience, obtain all you desire. M. de Grignan will not come, and the King will give and send you the blue ribbon, with the cross at the end. If the others absent are created knights by an old knight, as it is said, the Archbishop (of Arles) will be requested to receive his dear nephew: if not, it will take place upon your first journey, and you will have the blue ribbon in the mean time. In a word, you will do like the rest, and you will receive your instructions.

How do you and Monsieur d'Aix agree? He has bestowed so many praises upon me, as you inform me, that I dare not tell you, I wish he may not be displeased with you all. But you know in general, and the coadjutor also, how much the bickerings in the provinces are detested here: we call them *picking of lobsters*. As to your child, the Chevalier endeavours to make him a man with a head, pointing out to him the great inconveniences of being without one. It will not be our fault, if he does not in your absence learn all that he was ignorant of before; yet he is not less kissed and caressed, his fate being to be completely beloved. I supped last night at the Duchess of Lude's, where I met Madame de Coulanges, the first president of the court of Aids, and the Marshal de Crequi's lady. This last, I must acknowledge, gave me pleasure in telling me, after paying you several compliments, that your son had acquired great honour this campaign; that she knew

knew it from a quarter that could not be suspected ; and that he had not only distinguished himself for resolution and coolness, but for wisdom, having abstained from certain too joyous parties, without pretending to be a Cato, or without making himself hated ; and that these were admirable dawning ; that she rejoiced with you and me ; these particular praises, supported by a person who is not addicted to flattery, appeared to me worthy of being communicated to you.

A chapter of the widows was held yesterday at Madame de Lavardin's, when Madame de la Rochefoucault was admitted a member, as I have told you. It should seem that we met only to talk of you, and celebrate you. You are acquainted with the solid manner of Madame de Lavardin. We joined issue upon the subject in debate, that every one should keep his place, the great without being degraded, and the others without being elevated.

M. de Grignan is in the right to triumph upon the praises I have paid him on his son's first campaign. But yet he is not acquainted with all his full value—never was he more in the right ; but why should he imagine these eulogiums ironical ? what does he think me incapable of finding every thing admirable that he thinks, as well as all that he has ever thought ? I complain in turn, and till this quarrel can be settled, I embrace him with all my heart. This is what spoils him ; for notwithstanding so many storms and tempests, we love him still.

Madame de Broglio thinks of residing with you, as she is going into Languedoc. We are not yet acquainted with the destiny of La Trouse, but we have no uneasiness upon that score ; he will be the prettiest of all the knights ; I shall see him at his house. If M. de Grignan had assisted at the ceremony, I should have wished to have seen him, and been an eye-witness of his elegant appearance.

The King of England is constantly betrayed, even by his own officers : M. de Lausun is the only person who has not deserted him. A parliament will be convened, and it is hoped that two thirds will oppose the Prince of Orange. The little Prince is safe between here

here and Portsmouth. What do you say to this English nation?

LETTER DCXXXII.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday December 22, 1688.

MY dear girl, you have made so lively an impression upon our hearts, and all our thoughts and actions so constantly turn upon you, and as you said, we are so assembled in your name, that we can no longer support the absence of the dear Countess whom we so passionately love: I speak as a community; for your child is sensible of the estrangement, and the misfortune of not seeing you. I incessantly tell him to avail himself of the solid happiness of having an uncle like the Chevalier; we have very useful conversations with him. When he sometimes becomes absent, or he puts questions out of place, it reminds me of the cat metamorphosed into a woman: she crept away when she saw a mouse; so the Marquis, who is a man, in some unguarded moments shews he is a child, and he should really now enter at the academy; examining his conduct, and you must own he is very pretty, and very much altered. I embrace him very often, and make you the pretence; for I sometimes unexpectedly seize him, and explain to him the cause. Madame de la Fayette, to whom your uncle introduced him, is much delighted with him. I shall carry him to Madame de Lavardin's, who, through excessive esteem, will not pay you any compliments; those who compliment you, love you too; all is right.

You will have your instructions with the ribbon and the cross like the others: you will be all treated the same, whether a knight invests with the order, or you are allowed to wear it before your reception; only have a little patience. The minister's letter is not to be considered as leave: in a word, we should be sorry to see M. de Grignan in the present situation of affairs; for every thing is in such confusion with respect to England, that each one keeps his post. The interruption our correspondence has met with, has prevented your taking immediately a good resolution. Your prelates have deserted you: I equally admire those who build

build, and those who do not complete their building ; the latter are indeed more insupportable not to finish what they had begun, and leave every thing in disorder at your castle. This deprives us of patience, and gives us the gout ; but this gout is not very considerable nor very painful ; but it is an impertinence and weakness that prevent our going to Versailles as much as if it were more considerable. We send you some verses of Madame Deshoulières, which you will like.

Sanzei goes sometimes to Versailles, and he eats at Madame de Coulanges ; for instead of your good table, at which we were so well fed, we have nothing but a few crumbs put together : he will have a lieutenancy of dragoons ; he has been in the trenches like the rest, and he is contented. But without flattery, the fairies have every where whispered about the Marquis's campaign ; he pleased every body, as well by his intrepidity in danger, as by his gaiety and sensible conduct ; and opinions are unanimous upon this subject. This contusion was the last gift of the fairy, for it has given a finishing stroke to the whole ; and may properly be called the bird, or the stag's foot. M. d'Avaux must be arrived. The Abbe Guenegaud wept for Madame de Memes, before he began to stammer. Madame de St. Geran is brought to bed of a little girl ; this was not worth the trouble.

LETTER DCXXXIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday December 24, 1688.

THE Marquis was all alone at Versailles, where he behaved very well ; he dined with M. de Maine at M. de Montausier's ; he supped at Madame d'Armagnac's ; and pays his court at the levees and all the couchees. *Monseigneur* ordered him the wax candlestick ; in a word, he is started into the world, and he does very well. He is in fashion, and never had any ore such a lucky beginning, not so good a character, for I should never end, were I to tell you of all who speak well of him. I am inconsolable to think you have not the pleasure of seeing and embracing him, as I do every day.

But

But should it not seem, that whilst I am talking to you with so much tranquillity, I have nothing to communicate ; listen, listen, to a piece of news that is scarce worth relating. The Queen of England, and the Prince of Wales, with his nurse and a single rocker, are expected here to-morrow. The King has sent them his coaches upon the road to Calais, where the Queen arrived Thursday last the 21st instant, accompanied by M. de Lausun. M. Courtin, who is just returned from Versailles, gave us the following account yesterday at Madame de la Fayette's. You know that M. de Lausun resolved about six weeks ago to go over to England ; he could not better employ his leisure time, and he did not desert the K. of E. whilst every one else betrayed or abandoned him. In fine, on Sunday last, the 18th of this month, the King who had taken his resolution, lay with the Queen, ordered away all those who still serve him, and in an hour's time arose to order a valet de chambre, to introduce a man whom he would find at the door of the anti-chamber ; this was M. de Lausun. The King told him, I entrust you with the Queen and my son, you must risk every thing, and endeavour to conduct them to France. M. de Lausun thanked him, as you may believe ; but he desired to have with him a gentleman of Avignon, named St. Victor, known to have a great share of courage and merit. St. Victor took the little Prince under his cloak ; he was said to be at Portsmouth whilst he lay concealed in the palace. M. de Lausun presented his hand to the Queen ; you may image to yourself the leave she took of the King ; they then went into the street accompanied by the two women, whom I have mentioned to you, and took a hackney coach. They then sailed down the river in a little boat, whilst it was very tempestuous, and without shelter. In fine, at the mouth of the river they went on board a yacht, M. de Lausun going up to the master with the design, had he been a traitor, of throwing him into the sea. But as he imagined he had only common people aboard, as it most frequently happened, he thought of nothing but sailing through about fifty Dutch ships, who even did not perceive this little bark

bark ; and thus protected by heaven, and sheltered from the threatened danger, she landed safely at Calais, where M. de Charot received the Queen with all the respect you can imagine. The courier, who brought the news yesterday at noon to the King, related all the particulars ; and at the same time orders were sent to dispatch the King's coaches to meet this Queen, and conduct her to St. Vincennes, which is furnishing for her. It is said the King will join her upon the road. Here is the first volume of the romance, the sequel of which you shall have immediately. We have just been assured, that to complete the splendor of the adventure, M. de Lausun, after having put the Queen and Prince safely into the hands of M. de Charot, proposed returning to England with St. Victor, to share with the King his cruel and shocking fate. I admire the invention of M. Lausun's stars, which are willing to render his name still more brilliant, at the very time it seems sunk in oblivion. He carried 20,000 pistoles to the King of England. Indeed, my girl, this is a very noble and gallant action ; and what compleats it, is his returning to a country, where, according to all appearances, he must perish either with the King, or by the rage in which he has thrown the people by the last stroke he has played upon them. I leave you to ruminant upon this romance, and embrace you with a kind of friendship that is not common.

LETTER DCXXXIV.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday December 27, 1688.

DO you know that your little captain is on the road to Chalons, to view that fine company you have raised for him ? He set out on Christmas-day to lie at Claié, and in his way to pay his devoirs at Livri ; he will return on Sunday. The Chevalier has laid out all his time ; M. du Plessis is with him, ever happy at the marks of your esteem and confidence : you may be persuaded that he is entirely devoted to you and your son, and that will be so as much as you desire. He seems to me, with his fierce cocked hat and his black cravat, like the marshal who turned painter through love ; and indeed

indeed it was his love for your family that made him turn warrior; in fine, he has courage, boldness, and every virtue that can effect your pleasure. So much for the chapter upon M. du Plessis: now for the Marquis; you think he is fat, but you are mistaken; on the contrary, the lower part of his waste is more slender than it was, he is grown, but do you think people can grow much in two months and a half? So many things, my dear child, have occurred within these three months, that they appear like three years. In a word, the time does not glide, as when we were together. Soleri has given you an account of our society, which subsists only in you and for you; for you are our true link; and that pretty picture—but he never says a word which tires us; you are much handsomer than him, without flattery. I shewed the Dutches of Lude this morning your page of writing, with which she is very well contented; she was deserving of this for the friendly testimonies she every day gives for you. After mass, she carried me with Alliot to the Abbe Tetu's; this Abbe never sleeps; he is, indeed, very ill; his disorder is more than common vapours, and one cannot look at him without pity. Madame de Coulanges and all his friends are very careful of him.

Nothing is talked of but the Queen of England; she has desired to breathe a little at Boulogne, till she receives news from the King her husband, who has escaped from England, without any one knowing where he is. The King has sent this Queen three coaches with ten horses, litters, pages, footmen, guards, lieutenants, and officers. You will find all this in good Bigorre's letter. M. de Lausun ought to be very well satisfied with this adventure; he has displayed sense, judgment, conduct, and courage; and has at length found the road to Versailles through St. James's; this was a discovery for him alone to make. The Princess is quite happy to think that the King is satisfied at his conduct, and that they will see him return to court. The Chevalier converses with me upon the subject you wrote to him about; I imagine you choose it should be so, as you knew what confidence is in friendship.

M. Coig-

M. Coignet took it into his head the other day to marry your son with little Lamoignon, to whom M. Voisin is to give 100,000 crowns, till he gets something better; the knight is fond of this thought. M. de Mirepoix is to wed the daughter of the Dutchess de la Ferte with 50,000 little crowns ill paid; this marriage was brought about nobody knows how. Madame de Mirepoix gives her son, who is a great match, to the most indifferent girl at court. I want to know what Madame de Pui-du-fou says upon this head.

The ceremony (of the knights) is to be performed without ceremony at Versailles in the chapel. It is to begin on Friday at vespers, and is to continue on New-year's day in the morning, and the remainder at vespers. The King has dispensed with the obligation of communing at the ceremony; his Majesty will not wear his great cloak, he will have nothing but the collar; cloaks are lent, so that it is plain they are not absolutely necessary. The King is very well pleased with the manner in which M. de Monaco* received the order, he has said it publickly, which embarrasses those who have refused it. It is very probable that the same courier who carries the ribbon to Monaco, will carry it to M. de Grignan. It seems to me to resemble our behaviour to a dog, whom we stroke and make much of, and presently kick. The comparison is rich, but I am afraid it will bring me on a quarrel with a punctilious genius; he will say, I treat him like a dog: adieu, my dearest and most amiable girl—I have a hundred things still to say to you; but they would overwhelm you.

LETTER DCXXXV.

To the Same.

Wednesday, December 29, 1688.

THIS then is the dreadful Wednesday, when you desired me to neglect my dear girl; but all the consolation I receive after my fatigue, is to write and talk with her a little. I sufficiently remember Provence and Aix, and I know very well the cause you

* He consented to take rank as Duke of Valentinois, and not as Prince of Monaco.

have to complain of the election of the consuls, which took place on St. Andrew's day, and approve very much of your having it annulled by the parliament. I have seen father Gaillard, who is very well pleased; he will speak to M. de Croissi, and will transfer the whole business to M. de Grignan. A juster revenge could not take place, nor by a method that can more effectually cure and correct him of the fancy to displease you. I compliment M. Gaillard upon it; I am really flattered at the thoughts of holding a seat in so good a head; I shall never forget his looks so full of fire and wit. Do you not sometimes confer with him?

I comprehend this two months work that you have this winter to perform at Aix; it appears great and difficult at the first sight: but when you are accustomed to business, being every day overwhelmed with duty and writing, you will find the days, notwithstanding their fatigue and irksomeness, to glide away. I have passed some very tiresome ones, without the course of time being stopt: the truth is, that at the expiration of three months, one would imagine it to be five years since our separation. If you will believe me, you may remain very well at Aix till after Easter; Lent is not so rigid there as at Grignan. The north wind of Grignan, which makes you swallow the dust of all your prelates, gives me the stomach-ach for you, and seems to be a little camp of Maintenon. You may make what use you please of these reflections; as to me, there is nothing I so much wish for, as to labour with my dear girl, and complete my life in loving her, and receiving the tender pious marks of her friendship; for you seem to me pious Æneas in the shape of a woman.

I have seen Sanzei, and embraced him for you; he threw himself upon his knees, and kissed my feet; I acquaint you with his extravagance, as I would Don Quixote's; he is no longer a musqueteer; he is a lieutenant of dragoons; he has spoken to the King, who told him, that if he would serve with application, care would be taken of him. In such a situation raillery must be laid aside. You will not believe how the ingenuous character, which made us laugh, is necessary to your son, and how much it contributes to his reputation; in

a word,

a word, he is in vogue, and it is the fashion to speak well of him. Madame de Verneuil, who is returned, began yesterday upon this subject, and afterwards paid you a thousand friendly compliments. I believe that Madame de Coiffin* will, at length, be Madame d'Enrichemont.

Madame de Coulanges, whom I saw this morning at La Bagnol's, told me that she had received your answer, and that she would shew it me to-night at the Abbe Tetu's. Now you are freed from this answer; but you make my situation very lamentable thus to reply singly to a hundred persons who have written to you: this is a cruel fashion in France. But what shall I say to you of England, where the fashions and manners are still more terrible? M. de Lamouignon has informed the Chevalier, that the King of England was arrived at Boulogne; another says at Brest; a third, that he has been stopt in England; and a fourth that he was lost in the late dreadful storm at sea: here is choice of intelligence. It is now seven o'clock, and the Chevalier will not close his packet till the polite hour of eleven; if he knows any thing more to be depended upon, he will acquaint you with it. It is very certain that the Queen will not quit Boulogne, till she receives some news from her husband; she weeps and prays incessantly. The King was yesterday very uneasy for his Britannic Majesty. Here is a wide field before us, and we are very attentive to the Gods decree

— *Et nous voulons apprendre
Ce qu'ils ont ordonné du beaupère & du gendre.*

— and we are eager to know how they have disposed of the father-in-law and his son.

I now resume my letter, being returned from the Chevalier's apartment. Neyer was there known such a day as this; four different reports spread concerning the K. of E. and all from authentic quarters. He is at Calais, he is at Boulogne, he is stopt in England, he is cast away; nay, according to a fifth, he is at Brest; and all the rumours are so blended, that there is no knowing

* Magdelan Aimande du Camabout, married the 10th of August following to Maximilian de Bethune, Duke of Sully, and Prince d'Enrichemont.

knowing what to think. M. Courtin relates one account, M. de Rheims another, and M. de Lamoignon a third. The footmen are incessantly going and coming; I must therefore take my leave of my dear girl, without being able to tell her any thing positive, unless it be that I love her as her heart deserves, and my inclination prompts me; and in this career I always give a full loose to the reins of affection.

LETTER DCXXXVI.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday December 31, 1688.

PER tornar dunque al nostro proposito, I must tell you, daughter, that all the uncertainties propagated the day before yesterday, and which seemed to be ascertained by the assurances which M. de Lamoignon gave us, that the K. of E. was at Calais, are now changed into as great certainties, that he is stopped in England; and if this ill fortune has not waited him, he has perished; for he was to have made his escape, and embarked a few hours after the Queen: so, that though we have no certain intelligence of his being stopped, there is not a single person who does not now credit it. This is the situation of every one; and as we are now upon the point of closing this year, and entering upon that of 89, so big with predictions and great events, none will take place but what are agreeable to the order of Providence, as well as all our actions, and all our journeys. We must submit to every thing, and look into futurity, which is going a great way.

This, in the mean while, Count, is addressed to you; yesterday the knights of St Michael went through the ceremony with several of those of the order of the Holy Ghost, at the hour I mentioned to you after Vespers, and to-morrow the rest will do the same. The Chevalier will acquaint you with the substitution for the absentees. You must make your profession of faith, and your information of life and manners. This you will be acquainted with, in which you are not singular; and in the mean time all is right. Yesterday M. de Chevreuse, of the order of St. Michael, passed before M. de laRochefoucault, who said to him,

Sir, you pass before me, which you should not do. M. de Chevreuse replied to him, *Sir, I ought, for I am Duke de Luines.* Oh, *Sir,* rejoined the other, *in that respect you are right.* The Gazette will, my dear Count, acquaint you, that M. de Luines has given this duchy to his son, with the King's permission; and M. de Chevreuse, who will henceforth be called M. de Luines, has given the duchy of Chevreuse to his son, who will be styled the Duke de Montfort. Your son has some high titled comrades. It is said that some troops are to be sent into Britanny with M. de Momont, field-marshall, to be under the command of M. de Chaulnes; there will be encampments in all the provinces. You need only refer to the map, to judge whether we have occasion to be on our guard on all sides: cast your eyes a little all over Europe. Madame de Barillon is in great pain for her husband; but it is said at randoin, for no letters arrive, that he is in safety, though the chapel of the K. of E. has been pulled down, as likewise that belonging to the ambassador's household; this will all be soon cleared up; but who am I speaking to? is it still to this Count? My dear child, your mamma, who swore she would not touch a card till the K. of E. had won a battle, will not probably, poor woman, play for a long time. The Prince of Orange is kept in London—this point I always recur to, which is the last in all companies, for every one considers this great affair as his particular business. The Queen is constantly in a convent at Boulogne, ever in tears at the absence of her husband, whom she passionately loves.

Madame de Brinon is quite forgotten. A new comedy is said to be in rehearsal, which is to be represented at St. Cyr, and is called Esther. The carnival does not seem as if it would be very brilliant. My son's letters are constantly filled with the most tender sentiments for you and M. de Grignan. We expect your letters, but probably shall not answer them till Monday. The Chevalier and I have very long dialogues about you; he is pretty well, and when your son returns from Chalons, he proposes to conduct him to Versailles.

Versailles. The good Corbinelli exhausts his rhetoric upon the present situation of affairs, and at the same time adores you. Adieu, thou most amiable girl; I embrace you a thousand times, and wish you a happy year in that of 89.

I was upon the point of inquiring of you concerning Madame d'Oppede, and I find you anticipate my curiosity; I imagine she proves an agreeable companion for you, and perhaps the only one you have. As to M. d'Aix, I acknowledge I would not give credit to what the Provencals say with regard to him; I recollect that they are made of nothing but gossiping, which constitutes their whole business. Neither must M. d'Aix be too implicitly believed: and yet how can we think that a man, who has been his whole life a courtier, and who swears by every thing sacred, that he cares not for the intrigues of consuls, would dishonour himself before God and man by perjury? But you are the properest person to judge, being upon the spot.

Your brother knights went through the ceremony at Versailles on New-year's day. Couranges is returned, he gives you a thousand thanks for your pretty answer. I admire every thought that flows from your pen, they are so just and so happily turned. He told me that they began on the Friday, as I informed you; the first were professors with their brilliant habits and collars. Saturday was fixed for two marshals of France, when the marshal de Bellfond was completely ridiculous, as through modesty, and to avoid parade, he had omitted giving his pages ribbons to their breeches knees, whereby they appeared quite naked. The whole troop was very magnificent; M. de la Troussi was the best dressed, but by some accident his wig was discommodeed, and turned almost round, so that one side of his head was naked; he kept tugging, without being able to remove the inconvenience, which did not a little disconcert him. Upon the same line M. de Montchievreuil and M. de Villars were so completely entangled together with swords, ribbons, lace, and spangles, that it was not in the power of man to separate them; and the more they were handled, the more

interwoven they became. At length, the whole ceremony, the bow, and manege being all at a stand, it was necessary that force should do what art had in vain essayed, and the strongest carried it. But what entirely interrupted the gravity of the ceremony, was the negligence of good M de Hocquincourt, who was dressed in the manner of the Provencals and the Bretons; his pages breeches fitted them still less than those they usually wear, and his shirt would not be confined to his own, in spite of all he could do; for knowing its situation, he was continually endeavouring to adjust it properly, but without any kind of success; in short, it was so ridiculous, that the Dauphines could not refrain from bursting out into a loud laugh. The King's Majesty was even inclined to be moved, and in all the archives of the order, no precedent of such an adventure can be found; in a word, he was completely ridiculous. It is certain, that if my son-in law had been a party concerned in this ceremony, I should have been present; there were many vacant places, every one thinking they should be filled, which was the case at the carousal. The next day the court was dazzled with the blue ribbons; the young ones with fine shapes wear them over their coats, the others underneath. You would have had your choice, at least with respect to shape. I am told that the absent knights will be instructed to wear the ribbon the King sends them with the cross. This advice the Chevalier is to communicate to you. So much for the chapter of the blue ribbons.

The King of England was taken, it is said, in a hunting dress, endeavouring to make his escape. He is at Whitehall with his captain of the guards, his guards, and the lords at his levee; but this is kept very secret. The Prince of Orange is at St. James's, which is on the other side the park. The parliament is to be assembled: God preserve this bark. The Queen of England will be here on Wednesday; she comes to St. Germains to be near the King and his bounty.

The abbe Tetu is ever deserving of compassion; opium has frequently no effect upon him; and when he dozes

dozes a little he is quite overwhelmed, because the dose is doubled, I give your compliments to every one you desire should receive them. The widows are your own on earth and in the third heaven. I was on New-year's day at Madame Croiset's; I there met with Rabantel, who mentions your son to great advantage, and without any compliment; he speaks of his growing reputation, and his good disposition, and also his prowess at Philipburgh. It is said that M. de Lausun was three quarters of an hour with the King; if this continues, you may easily guess who will be glad to see him again.

LETTER DCXXXVII.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday January 3, 1689.

YOUR dear son arrived this morning; we were charmed to see him and M. du Plessis; we were at table, and they made a marvellous good dinner upon our repast, which was already somewhat impaired. Oh! that you had heard all that the Marquis said upon the beauty of his company! He first inquired whether the company was arrived, and then whether it was a fine one? Truly, Sir, they told him, it is one of the finest there are, *it is an old company*, which is much preferable to any of the *new ones*. You may imagine the impression of such a panegyric to a person who was not known to be the captain. Our son was transported the next day at the sight of his fine company, when mounted; those men seemingly made on purpose, and chosen by you, who are an excellent judge; and those horses cast in the same perfect mould, afforded him such exquisite joy, that M. de Chalons and Madame de Noailles could not help participating it with him. He has been received by those pious folks as the son of M. de Grignan; but how foolish is it for me to relate all this to you! this is the Marquis's business.

I took the Marquis with me yesterday; we began by visiting M. de la Trousse, who was so complaisant as to put on both dresses, that of the novice and professor, the same as on the ceremonial day; these two dresses

are very advantageous to a well-made man. A frivolous thought, without considering consequences, made me regret that the fine shape of M de Grignan had not shone upon this occasion. The pages dress is very pretty ; and I am not at all surprised that Madame de Cleves should fall in love with M. de Nemours and his handsome legs. As to the mantle, it is a representation of royal Majesty ; it cost La Trousse 800 pistoles, for he purchased it. After having been spectators at this pretty masquerade, I carried your son to all the ladies in the neighbourhood. Madame de Vaubecourt and Madame Ollier received him with great politeness ; he will soon pay his visits upon his own account.

The life of St. Lewis has induced me to read Mezerai ; I was willing to take a view of the last Kings of the second race, and I want to unite Philip de Valois with King John : this is an admirable historical period, upon which the Abbe de Choisi has written a book, that may be read with satisfaction. We endeavour to beat into your son's head the necessity of being a little acquainted with what passed before our time, and it will have effect : but, in the mean while, there are many reasons for paying attention to what passes at present. You will see by the news of to-day how the K. of E. escaped from London, probably by the good-will of the Prince of Orange. Politicians reason upon this subject, and ask if it be more advantageous for this King to be in France ; some say yes, because he is here in security, and he will not run the risk of being compelled to give up his wife and child, or lose his head ; others say no, because he leaves the Prince of Orange to enjoy his protectorship with admiration, having made his way to it naturally and without spilling any blood. What is certain is, that war will soon be declared against us, and perhaps we may declare it first. If we make peace in Italy and Germany, we may apply ourselves with greater attention to this English and Dutch war ; this is to be hoped, for it would be too much to have enemies on all sides. You see whether the rambling of my pen leads me ; but you may easily think that all companies re-

echo

echo with these great events. I conjure you, my dear girl, when you write to M. de Chaulnes, to tell him you are very sensible of the obligations he has conferred upon my son, and that you thank him; that the great distance between you does not render you insensible to your brother's welfare: the subject of this acknowledgment is somewhat new, it is being dispensed from commanding the first regiment of militia, which he is raising in Britanny. My son cannot think of returning into the service in such a manner; he is shocked at it, and desires only to be forgotten in his own country. This notion meets the approbation of the Chevalier, and I also approve of it, I must acknowledge; are not you of this opinion, my dear girl? I always consider your sentiments of great importance, as being always good, particularly when they relate to your brother. Do not enter into particulars; but say, in general, what pleases the brother must give satisfaction to the sister. M de Momont is gone into Britanny with some troops, which are in marvellous subjection to M. de Chaulnes. The beginning is pleasant, we must attend to the sequel.

I met Choiseul yesterday with his ribbon, he is very well; one must be greatly out of luck not to meet five or six of them every day. Did I tell you that the King has laid aside the communion of the ceremony? This I have long wished for; I place the beauty of this action upon a par with abolishing duelling. Consider, in fact, what would have been the consequence of blending this holy act with the immoderate mirth excited by M. de Hocquincourt's shirt *. Many, however, performed their devotions, but without ostentation or compulsion. We are going to prepare for the reception of their Britannic Majesties, who are expected at St. Germains. The Dauphiness will have a seat before this Queen, though she be only representative of the Queen. My dear, I am constantly wishing for you, and lamenting your absence; I perceive all your engagements, all your reasons; but I cannot habituate myself to the missing of you, where you would be so necessary; this reflection often afflicts me. Here is a letter composed of words

* See the letter of January 3, 1689.

that signifying nothing ; do not trouble yourself to answer it, preserve yourself, and take care of your stomach.

LETTER DCXXXVIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday January 7, 1689.

I RECEIVED your letter a day later than usual ; I expect to hear from you again to-day, but as the post does not come in till late, we shall not answer them till Sunday or Monday. You write so well, my dear girl, when you have no particular subject, that I am as well pleased with those uncontrovèrteòd epistles, as those which are answers. In a word, my heart finds no relief but this during your absence ; I am in the same situation as you, counting the immensity of time since your departure ; three months seem as many years ; not that I have seen such a variety of objects as you have met with, but from the different thoughts, occupations, and disquietudes, which have supplied the place of objects. I have regretted and still regret your loss every day ; how, in effect, can I resolve to give up the sight and company of my dear girl, after having been so long and so agreeably accustomed to it ? that fatal day of Charenton is all fresh and lively to my remembrance. You gave me a rendezvous at the Chevalier's, where I failed not being, but you did not come ; your picture afforded me no consolation. I am now in his apartment ; he has had pains in his right hand all night, and they still continue. He supped the night before twelfth-day very chearfully with M. de Lamoignon, and in the night he was seized with this disorder, which is very lamentable. He is every day chalking out plans for going to Versailles, and is scarce ever able to execute them : it is your misfortune and his, that he is estranged from a place where he would make so good a figure, and be so useful to his family and his nephew. He is possessed of much patience and resignation, as Corbinelli boasts of having taught him as a master. We seldom see this Corbinelli, he is incessantly engaged with his friends, and I let him go through friendship for him, for we are prudent. He sometimes at night partakes of a cold

a cold collation with us ; he is very good company, and returns you a thousand thanks for having mentioned his name, and yours is more impressed on his mind than any other. We do not see the Abbe Bigorre frequent enough, he will to-night send you a fine large sheet. When the subject is the arrival of the K. and Q. of E. and the P. of W. with the particulars of the gracious, humane, and tender reception the King gave these Princes, you may guess that the paper will be pretty well crammed.

I wait with impatience to hear that you have received your ribbon. M. le Grand, M. de Dangeau, M. de Chatillons, M. de la Rangers, have carried theirs to the Queen of England, in waiting upon her to compliment her : she will find our court very brilliant with this new ornament. I carried your son yesterday to Madame de Lavardin's, who received him as her grandson, for she loves you like a daughter : from thence we went to Madame de la Fayette's, where we met with M. de Villars *, quite full of the *Orondate* air ; I informed him of all you desired me to tell him. I imagine there will be many balls this winter at Versailles.

Madame de Ricouat is a widow, she is still in the country, I shall see her upon her return ; would you have me pay your compliments to her ? The omission is sometimes equal to presenting them ; for instance, Madame de Lavardin always told me, that she sent no compliments to you ; I have met with many of this way of thinking, who are not willing to displease you ; so that you may believe, upon my word, every thing goes right, and those who do not overwhelm you with ceremony, are more agreeable than those who do ; for your answers are quite ingenuous, and keep their proper place, amidst the fatigue of your writing. You are willing that I should write to Madame de Solre † ; good heaven, what a tax you impose upon me ; the style necessary will be to me putting on the buskin. Coulanges told

* Peter Marquis de Villars, father to the late Marshal-Duke of that name, was known in the world by the name of *Orondate*, on account of his fine air and his great prowess. He was ambassador in Savoy, Spain, and Denmark.

† Anna Maria Frances de Bournonville, Countess of Solre.

us the other day a comical story with a kind of enthusiasm. He said that the Count de Solre waited upon M. de Chauvri †, followed by two porters, with a couple of very heavy trunks. Having brought them in and put them down, he drew out from the first that was open his arm full of papers, and said to him, in throwing them upon the table, "Sir, these are the titles of thirty-seven knights of the Golden-fleece of my family ;" M. de Chauvri said to him, greatly embarrassed, " Oh, Sir, there is no occasion for so much, you disorder all my papers. I know not where to find the deeds of Mr. Such a one, and those of Mr. Such a one, whose names are not a whit like yours." M. de Chauvri begged he would pull out no more papers ; but the Count de Solre, paying him no attention, produced another great bundle, saying, " This, Sir, is the marriage-contract of one of my grandfathers with Sabina of Bavaria." " Good God, Sir," said M. de Chauvri, " here is more than sufficient." M. de Solre then took up a great roller, and with the assistance of a servant, spread it all over the room, and shewed him he descended from two crowned heads, which closed two branches of his family, whilst M. de Chauvri was lamenting that he should never be able to find his papers again. Coulanges told this story so whimsically, and with so much pleasantry, that though it may appear very flat and insipid upon paper, it was very risible when he related it. What then would you have me to say to this woman quite covered with golden-fleeces ? We must rejoice with the order of the Holy Ghost at having so great a subject among us. I will not answer for writing ; this may properly be called small talk. I am constantly with the Chevalier, who is nodding in his great chair. Methinks I chatter to you as much as possible ; but do not amuse yourself with answering all this. If I were with you, I should like to afford you some consolation, in talking about your affairs, which I so often think of, and am so deeply interested in. In the mean time, do not please the Provencals so much as to break with the Archbishop and Intendants ; you will gratify them too much, let truth be the result of your own inquiry ; and though

† Genealogist of the King's order.

though they say what they please, give them to understand, that you will yourself obtain an ecclaircissement from those gentlemen ; the fear of being discovered will make them silent, for they aim at nothing but hidden slander, without having truth or your interest at heart. If you like this counsel, follow it : I thought I saw, when I was there, that the joy of the Provencals consisted in creating misunderstandings, and making themselves necessary *—Fie—lay aside the Provincial style, and that of Provence.

LETTER DCXXXIX.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday January 10, 1689.

WE often hit upon the same thoughts, my dear girl ; I even think that I informed you from the Rocks, what you write me in your last letter upon time. I now agree that it advances ; the days have now nothing so charming or so precious, as I found them when you was at the Hotel de Carnavalet. I relished, I devoured the hours, I was for hoarding them as a miser does his gold ; but now, in your absence, the case is very different, time is only irksome till the wished-for period approaches, and we would willingly dispose of all the intermediate space in favour of those who are willing to possess it. But I will acknowledge to you when I think — but whither will this elaborate dissertation on time lead me ? I tremble to find no certain jail, but on every side insurmountable obstacles. I will, my dear girl, conclude these reflections with respect to you, and endeavour to turn them to some advantage in regard to myself.

The Abbe Tetu is in a most shocking way for want of sleep. The physicians would not answer for preserving his intellects ; he feels his situation, which gives him great uneasiness : he subsists merely by opium ; he seeks for diversion and dissipation, and accordingly frequents public places. We want him to go to Versailles to see the K. and Q. of E. and the P. of W. Can any event be greater or more worthy of affording the greatest diversion ? As to the King's flight, it appears that

* See the letter of January 3, 1689.

that the Prince of Orange was well inclined towards it, The King was to be sent to Exeter, whither he proposed going; the front of his house was very well guarded, and all the back doors were left open. The Prince was not inclined to sacrifice his father-in-law; he remains in London in the place of a King, without taking upon himself the title, being only desirous of restoring what he thinks a good religion, and supporting the laws of the country, without spilling a drop of blood; this is precisely the reverse of the medal with respect to our sentiments; we see his designs thro' a very different medium. However, the King acts in a manner almost divine with respect to their B. M--'s; for is it not being the representative of the Almighty, to support a King, banished, betrayed, and abandoned? This great part gratifies the ambition of the King's noble soul. He went to meet the Queen, with all his household, and a hundred coaches and six. When he perceived the P. of W--'s coach, he alighted and tenderly embraced him; he then ran to the Queen, who was by this time alighted; he saluted her, spoke with her some time, placed her upon his right in his coach, and presented to her *Monseigneur* and *Monsieur*, who were also in the coach, and conducted her to St. Germains, where she found all things prepared for her like a Queen, all sorts of cloaths, among which was a very rich casquet containing six thousand Louis d'ors. The K. of E. was expected the next day at St. Germains, where the King waited for him, and he arrived late: his Majesty went to the end of the guard-room to meet him; the K. of E. made a very low bow, as if inclinable to embrace his knees, but the King hindered him, and embraced him three or four times very cordially. They spoke together in a low voice for near a quarter of an hour; the King presented to him, *Monseigneur*, and *Monsieur*, the Princes of the blood, and Cardinal Bonzi. He conducted him to the Queen's apartment, who could scarce refrain from crying; after a conversation of a few moments, the King conducted them to the P. of W. where they again conversed some time, and he then left them, not choosing to be reconducted back, saying to the K. "This is your house; when I come, you will do the honours

honours of it, and I will do them when you come to Versailles." The next day, which was yesterday, the Dauphiness went there with all the court. I know not how they regulated the chairs, for they had those belonging to the Queen of Spain ; and the Queen-dowager of England was treated as a daughter of France ; I shall hereafter acquaint you with the particulars. The King sent the K. of E. ten thousand Louis d'ors ; the latter looks old and much fatigued ; the Queen is there with weeping eyes, but they are fine and black ; a fine skin somewhat pale ; a large mouth, handsome teeth, and a good shape ; and if to this we add a great share of sense, no wonder if she pleases every one that sees her. Here is matter for public speculation for a long time.

The poor Chevalier cannot yet either write, or go to Versailles, which much afflicts us, as he has a thousand things to do there ; yet he is not ill ; and on Saturday supped with Madame de Coulanges, Madame de Vauvieux, M. de Duras, and your son, at the lieutenant-civil's, where the healths of the first and second were drank, that is to say, Madame de la Fayette's and yours, for you have yielded to the date of friendship. Yesterday Madame de Coulanges gave a very pretty supper to the gouty folks ; they consisted of the Abbe de Marsillac, the Chevalier de Grignan, and M. de Lamoignon, whose nephritic complaints stood him in the stead of the gout, together with his wife and the *divines*, ever replete with fluxions ; I was admitted in consideration of the rheumatism I had a dozen years ago, and Coulanges, who is highly entitled to the disorder, in honour of which this repast was given. There was no scarcity of conversation ; the little man sung, and gave the Abbe de Marsillac great pleasure, which he expressed by his admiration, time-beating, and the like, which made me recall to mind his father's behaviour when he was upon the point of being touched. Your son was at Madam de Castlenau's, where there is a very pretty agreeable young lady, who is quite your son's taste, and he leaves the squint-eyed girl to Sanzei : he took a hautboy with him, and they danced till midnight. This society gives the Marquis great satisfaction, as he meets with Saint Sterem, Janin, Choi-

seul, and Ninon; so that he is in no unknown country. The Chevalier does not seem to be in a great hurry to get him married, nor does M. de Lamouignon seem very desirous of seeing his daughter in a conjugal state. We can say nothing with respect to the marriage of M. de Mirepoix*, this is the work of M. de Montfort: people seem to be enchanted, or else their heads are turned, for they do not think as they used to do; in fine, this man's destiny seems strongly to propel him, and what would you have me to do in the matter?

M. de Lausun is not gone back to England, he has an apartment at Versailles, and is very easy; he has wrote to *Mademoiselle* to have the honour of seeing her, which has much displeased her. I have performed a master-piece, I have been to visit Madame de Recouart, lately returned very well contented with being a widow. You have nothing to do but appoint me to complete your acknowledgments, in the like manner as your romances—Do you recollect? I thank the amiable Paulina, for her letter, I am confident that her person will please me; she could not then find any other alliance with me but that of *madam*, this is being very serious. Adieu, my dear child, preserve your health, that is to say, your beauty, which I so much admire.

LETTER DCXL.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday January 10, 1689, 10 o'clock at night.
I HAVE been to visit Madame du Pui-du-fou upon this marriage. Madame de Montausier and Madame de Lavardin are come hither: I told Madame de Lavardin that you remembered her, and she has a great affection for you. An instant after this conference, a most brilliant group appeared; it consisted of the Duchess de la Ferte, leading her daughter, who is very pretty, and her young sister, dressed alike §; the Duchess

* Gaston John Baptist de Levis, Marquis de Mirepoix, wedded January 16, 1689, Ann Charlotte Maria de Saint Nectain, daughter to Henry Francis, Duke de la Ferte, and of Mary Gabriel Angelica de la Mothe Houdancourt.

§ Catharine de Louise de St. Nectaire, married in July 1698. to Francis Thisaut, Marquis de la Carte, afterwards Marquis de la Ferte.

ches d'Aumont † and M. de Mirepoix, who formed a most astonishing contrast. What an uproar! volleys of compliments flying on every side. The Duchess was always desirous of being united to M. de Mirepoix, and she threw her net accordingly. When she found that the proposal was well received, she spoke to the King of the match; this finishes and brings all matters to a point. The King said to her, "Madame, your daughter is very young." "That is true, sire, but the thing is pressing, because I am willing M. de Mirepoix should have her, and in ten years time, when your Majesty is acquainted with his merit, and you will have recompensed it, she will want nothing more of us." The thing is thus settled, and the bans are published before the articles are settled; never were so many *cartes before horses*. Madame d'Olonne * was very eloquent; Madame de la Ferte shone: all concerned in these nuptials are satisfied; Madame de Mirepoix has wrote to you, Madame du Pui-du-sou † is carried away in the whirlwind, nobody can be heard. The young man had never seen his mistress, he does not know what to make of all this. My pen is good for nothing, and, my dear girl, I wish you good night.

LETTER DCXLI.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday January 12, 1689.

YOU retired at five o'clock in the afternoon, you chose King and Queen then at dinner: you were in very good company, as good as at Paris. It will not be my fault if the Archbishop (of Aix) does not know that you are satisfied with him; I acquainted Madame de la Fayette with it the other day, who was much pleased with the information; she enjoins both of you to lay aside the spirit and way of thinking of Provence. But to come to the K. and Q. of E. it is so extraordi-

† Francis Angelica de la Mothe Houdancourt, eldest sister to the Duchess de la Ferte.

* Catherine Henrietta d'Angemos, Countess d'Olonne, eldest sister to Magdalen d'Angemos, wife to the Marshal de la Ferte.

† Madame de Bellievre, Marchioness du Pui-du-sou, mother to Madame de Mirepoix.

ry to have a court there, that it is the constant subject of conversation. The regulation of rank and precedence is now the object, in order to live agreeably with people who are now so unlikely to be restored. This the King said the other day, adding, that this King was the best in the world; that he should hunt with him; that he should come to Marli and Trianon; and that the courtiers should habituate themselves to him. The K. of E. does not give his hand to *Monseigneur*, and does not reconduct him. The Queen has not embraced *Monsieur*, who stands before her; she said to the King, tell me what you would have me do; if you choose I should follow the French taste, I will salute whom you please; but, according to the mode of England, I must embrace no one. She paid a visit to the Dauphiness, who was ill, and who received her in bed. No one sits in England; I believe the Duchesses will follow the French fashion, and behave to her as they do to her mother-in-law *. We are greatly taken up with this new court.

In the mean while, the Prince of Orange is in London, where he is imprisoning several Lords; he is severe, and he will soon make himself hated. M. Schomberg is general at arms in Holland in lieu of this Prince, and his son is to have the reversion—so the mask is completely thrown off.

I send you a list of the changes expected amongst the intendants. M. de Pomereuil is to be in Brittany; please God to prevent M. de Luxembourg's commanding the troops there; this would be a doleful affair for our friends! † We tremble at the thoughts of it. You know that the marshal de Lorges is going into Guienne, with St. Ruth under him. In fine, we are preparing to be upon our guard both at home and abroad. Consider how many troops, and what strength is necessary to attend to so many things at once.

The Chevalier is always fixed to his chair in his apartment; it has been judged improper for him to go out at night; and his situation, which disables him from going

* Henrietta of France, daughter to Henry IV. and wife to Charles I. King of England.

† M. and Madame de Chaulnes.

MARCHIONESS DE SEVIGNE. 41

going to Versailles, greatly mortifies him. I wish I could afford him some consolation and amusement; but the gloomy disposition arising from the gout, makes every thing indifferent to him. I should be glad to be of some utility; but, to my great regret, I am quite useless. I am constantly making your compliments, and I endeavour to estimate your dear remembrance. Madame de Coulanges is full of acknowledgments; she charges me to tell you a thousand polite, good-natured things. She is much taken up with the Abbe Tetu, who really is not well; he is at least troubled with very melancholy vapours and an incapacity to sleep, beyond the power of opium to remove.

Your son is very pretty; he was yesterday at the opera with *Monseigneur*. He has wrote to M. de la Carcassonne, and he will write to him again; the friendship of this uncle must be kept up to produce any effect, and I take care to make him remember. You describe to me in very natural colours the deformity of your married men; and methinks I am present at the nuptials. I am very well pleased that, contrary to your custom, you have told M. de Gaillard of the impression his merit has made upon me, and his significant looks. The marriage of M. de Mirepoix seems to be the mere effect of magic.

LETTER DCXLII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday January 14, 1689.

HERE I am, my dear girl, after dinner, in the Chevalier's apartment; he is in his chair, surrounded with a thousand little aches that fly about his person. He slept very well; but this kind of life, without being able to go out, throws him into the vapours, and greatly mortifies him; I am much affected, as I know the evil consequences better than any one. The weather is very cold; our thermometer is at the lowest degree, the river is frozen, it snows, freezes, and thaws at the same time; there is no walking in the streets; I keep the house and the Chevalier's chamber. If I could expect an answer from you before the end of a fortnight, I would desire you to tell me whether I do not

not incommod him, by staying with him all day; but as I have no time to lose, I shall put this question to himself, and methinks he will not be displeased at it. This weather is an additional cause of his illness; this is not the kind frost he likes, he is always out of order when it is so very cold. I have reminded M. de Lamougnon of your solicitation in favour of M. B—; this man will be equally sensible at a distance, as if near, of your remembrance. I admire the sentiments of discarding transitory acknowledgments; indeed, some people of my acquaintance are so completely divested of gratitude, that they substitute for it aversion and rudeness.

M. de Gobelins is always at St. Cyr; Madame de Brignon is at Maubuission, which she will soon be tired of: she can never remain in a place; she has made various agreements, and been in several convents: her good sense does not rescue her from this error. Madame de Maintenon is much pleased with the comedy * which she has acted by her young ladies of St. Cyr; it will be a very fine piece according to report. She has paid a visit to the Q. of E. who having made her wait a moment, said she was very sorry she had lost any time to see and converse with her, and received her very well. Every one is satisfied with this Queen, she is very sensible. She told the King, upon seeing him caress the P. of W. who is very handsome, "I envied the happiness of my son, who does not feel his misfortunes; but I now pity him, for not being sensible of your Majesty's caresses and goodness." All she says is proper and to the purpose; but this is not the case with her husband; he has a great share of courage, but his understanding is nothing above the common; he relates all that has passed in England with such insensibility, as makes his auditors have no feeling for him. He is a good man, and shares all the amusements of Versailles. The Dauphiness does not purpose visiting this Queen, she wants her right and chair, which cannot be; she will therefore be always in bed, when the Queen visits her. *Madeleine* will have a chair upon the left hand, and the Princesses of the blood will go only with her. The Dutchesse

* Either of Racine.

Duchesses will be there upon the same footing as at the Dauphiness's ; this is settled. The King, knowing that a King of France gave a Prince of Wales only a chair on the left hand, he chooses that the K. of E. should treat the Dauphin in the same manner, and take place before him. He is to receive *Monsieur* without chair or ceremony. The Q. has saluted him, without saying what I related. It is not yet certain that M. de Schomberg is to succeed the Prince of Orange in Holland. This is the year of falsehood. The Marchioness (d'Huxelles) contradicts every post the news she related ; is this knowing what passes ? I detest inventions.

M. de Lausun's stars are dwindled to their former dimness : he has no apartment : all the romantic marvellous part of his adventure is exploded, and it now contains nothing extraordinary.—Such is the world, and such are the times !

LETTER DCXLIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday January 17, 1689.

HERE then is my promised letter, this distinguishes its singular merit. I am very well pleased that my relation has diverted you. I never can guess at the effect my letters will have ; but this must needs have a good one.

If you endeavour to come to an eclaircissement with the Archbishop, instead of letting the misunderstanding ferment, which people endeavour to create between you, a short time will clear up the whole, or you will silence slanderers ; either of these is desirable, and you will find their agreeable effects ; you will indeed put an end to the amusement and employment of the Provençals ; but this is only silencing ridiculous impertinencies. M. de Barillon is arrived, he has found a family group with all whose faces he was not acquainted. He is grown very fat, and he says to M. de Harlai, " Sir, do not talk to me of my fat, and I will not speak to you of your leanness." He is very lively, and is much of the same disposition as his namesake, whom you knew. I will pay all your compliments to him when

when they will not appear forced: I have presented them to Madame de Sulli, who returns you a thousand with a very good grace; and to the Countess, who is too smart upon M. de Lausun, whom she was willing to raise to the pinnacle of honour, and who has yet neither a lodging at Versailles, nor the admittance he formerly had. He is merely returned to court, and his conduct does not appear in any extraordinary light; a very pretty romance has been already written upon him.

This English court is quite settled at St. Germain's; they would have no more than 15,000 livres a month, and have regulated their court upon that footing. The Queen is greatly liked; the King converses agreeably with her; she has much good sense without affectation. The King wanted the Dauphiness to pay her the first visit, but she was always indisposed so *à propos*, that this Queen paid her a visit three days ago, dressed to admiration; a black velvet robe, a fine hoop, her hair dressed out in taste, a shape like the Princess of Conti's, with much majesty: the King went to receive her when she alighted, she went first into his apartment, where she had a chair beneath the King's; here she remained half an hour; he then conducted her to the Dauphiness, who was found standing; this occasioned some little surprise; the Queen said to her, "Madam, I thought to have found you in bed." "Madam, replied the Dauphiness, I was willing to rise to receive the honour your Majesty does me." The King left them, as the Dauphiness has no chair before him. This Queen took her place with the Dauphiness on her right side, *Madame* upon her left, and there were three other chairs for the three young princes; they conversed together without interruption for upwards of half an hour; there were many Duchesses present, and the court was very numerous. At length she retired; the King being informed, accompanied her back to her coach. I do not know how far the Dauphiness went with her, but I shall know. The King upon his return highly praised the Queen; he said, "There is a proper model for a Queen both "in body and mind, paying her court with dignity."

He

He admired her courage in misfortunes, and her passion for the King her husband ; for it is certain that she loves him, as that infernal woman Madame de R—— told you. Some of our young Princesses, who were willing to give themselves airs, did not kiss the Queen's robes, some of the Duchesses were willing to do the same ; but the King was much displeased at it, and now they pay her homage. Madame de Chaulnes was informed of these particulars, and has not yet performed this duty. She has left the Marquis at Versailles, because the little gentleman was very well diverted there ; he has acquainted his uncle that he should go to-day to the ballet at Trianon. The Chevalier will transmit you his letter. He is there then upon his good faith, executing all the commissions his uncle has given him, to habituate himself to exactness and accounts ; what advantage will he not derive from this kind of education ? I have received an answer from M. de Carcassonne, it is a curious piece, but it must be passed over in silence ; you may assure yourself I shall reply to it in a proper manner ; he has taken seriously, and quite misunderstood my raillery. Ah ! my child, I perfectly comprehend your tears, when you image to yourself this little fellow at the head of his company, and all the good that may befall him in that situation. The Abbe Tetu is constantly immersed in gloomy vapours. I have communicated to Madame de Coulanges all your kind expressions ; she is ever desirous of writing to you in my letter, but it never takes place. The Chevalier is not willing to conclude with friendly declarations ; but without minding him, I shall tenderly embrace you, and tell you that I love you with a natural inclination supported by all the friendship you have for me, and all your merit ; well now, where is the harm of ending a letter in this manner, and saying what one ever feels and thinks ?

Good day, Count, you are both, then, of the same opinion as to your business and expence ; would to God you had always been of this way of thinking ! Adieu, my dear Paulina, I cannot refrain laughing at you, after thinking for six weeks to take a name between
grand-

Monsieur de CORBINELLI.

Since you have had the blue ribbon, Madame, I have found only this corner of a letter to tell you that I am highly pleased at it, and the more so, as Madame de Carcassonne every day excites my pity upon this head ; I have, by dint of inspiring her with resignation, discovered the arduousness of my task, and consequently how agreeable it was for me only to dissemble upon these occasions. Accept, then, Madame, my homage, and may it be agreeable to you for me to say, that never was a *misanthropic* philosopher less so than me in this respect ; so much joy has unhinged me. A propos as to *misanthrope*, it is a sect that hath derived its existence from the fire-side of the Chevalier, who is the chief, and does me the honour of classing me amongst this dignified profession. I shall acquaint you with its progress, as soon as it becomes any way amusing in the history which I have begun. Do me the kindness to acquaint the Count (de Grignan) with my sentiments with respect to the point of knighthood. I forgot to tell you that the title of my book is *misanthropic* ; but the lady, your mother, maintains that it should be *misanthrope* : oblige me with the decision of this difficulty, and you shall have the first copy.

LETTER DCXLIV.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday January 19, 1689.

THIS is the Wednesday so expressly forbid by my dear Countess ; but surely she would not imply that I am in a state of inactivity whilst I am speaking to her. I frequently look upon your amiable picture, and I assure you, that I too soon and too fondly begin to desire seeing and embracing you, and to hear the sound of your voice ; my heart is replete with these desires and sentiments, and your picture does but enforce them, without gratifying them : Madame de Chaulnes was, the other day, delighted with it, and

and praised it so highly and with such a loud voice, that you might, methinks, have heard her, distant as you are; for I know your station, and this knowledge, in some degree, unfolds my imagination, as I can fly to you at a certain spot; but we are no longer neighbours. I admire Madame de Langdee's being in Provence, and absent from her family there: I imagine you are not pleased with the dinner you gave her, but her delicacy is beyond all gratification.

I find the Chevalier's good sense points out to him the impropriety of going to Avignon, which would put him to much expence. You have been the meteors of Provence for these twenty years; you should therefore now yield to the exigencies of your son, and the most needful: prudence immediately directs this; and this decent reason is easily comprehended; this will not seem a pretence, after so many proofs of your good will and magnificence. We should not attempt impossibilities; this truth has not, I am afraid, yet found a place among M. de Grignan's notions; and from his judging of the future by the past, he concludes that things will go on in their old track; but this is a vain and deceitful hope. We have reasoned a good deal upon this; lay aside all expectation of a reconciliation with the pope, and draw from Avignon all that the King allows you; but avail yourself of this favour as a blessing from heaven to support your son, and not to live more splendidly; for if you have not the courage to retrench, according to your resolution, this succour of Providence will become useless. This, my dearest girl, is the advice of a mother, whose love is as permanent as it is tender.

We expect your son to return hither to-night from Versailles; he set out a week ago with our Duchess of Chaulnes. I am very desirous of knowing how he has diverted himself there, and what sort of society he has found; we strongly recommended to him to avoid bad company, and we were convinced that he behaves better when alone, than when he thinks he is observed by any one with him; I shall know how he has conducted himself by M. de la Fayette who greatly interests himself for him.

M. d'Avaux

M. d'Avaux * came to see me the day before yesterday ; my letter was already sealed ; he spoke to me greatly in your favour, loving and honouring you as much now as when at Livri. He inquired of me whether you had received your blue ribbon ; I told him you had not yet received it the tenth ; he told me that the others had theirs ; and that as many things were omitted, he wculd prevent any farther delay ; that he should be ravished to give you an account of his success, and to avail himself of that opportunity to pay his compliments to you. I am very happy that he has taken upon himself this business ; if it be useles, so much the better ; and if it be not, so much the better still.

Madame de Chaulnes conducted me yesterday to the nuptials of Madame de la Ferte on Madame Maintenon's account, but she was not there ; they seem as if a misunderstanding had already arisen between them, and they were disputing again the next day, because the ready money was not yet arrived. I there found the husband and that child of twelve years old, so disproportioned to the Ethiopian King. This marriage is so heterogeneous, that I believe the mother will never make her appearance again. The Duchess de la Ferte will be a burthen to them, which she reckoned upon. She says that she is ruined ; that she has no more than an income of 10,000 livres, that she was in want of relations, and she married his kinsman, and keeps up this kind of discourse to eternity ; she is taking a great house in the street of St. Croix ; she says that when she is at Versailles, they are to be *économists* ; this *économie* is to consist of *bouillée* for the little woman. They are sometimes to dine with the lady of marshal de la Mothe, but this is not an establishment : all this plainly points out the felicity of this alliance.

We were yesterday at the Marchioness de Coislin's, who has lost her mother, the aged d'Alegre §. We were

* Anthony de Mesmes, Count d'Avaux, prevot and master of the ceremonies of the King's orders.

§ She died January 12.

were with Madame de Grignan's friend—what a cruel fashion to visit people at such a time! We then waited upon *Mademoiselle*, who scolded me for not having been to see her. I am not fond of speaking when she is out of temper. Adieu, my dear child, do not increase your troubles, increase only your courage and firm resolution.

Same date, 7 in the evening.

Here then is your letter. The frost which has glazed the Rhone and the Durance, has made a looking-glass of the Seine; it has benumbed us, and so spoiled our streets, that I have not been out these eight days, except with Madame de Chaulnes, at the expence of her horses; mine were not able to support themselves, so I made them no proposals. I was often in the Chevalier's apartment, who is now pretty well, and proposes going to Versailles, after the journey to Marli; but this must be said in the lowest whisper, for should the gout overhear us, it will prevent the design. The bad weather, which is somewhat mended to-day, has retarded our letters twenty-four hours.

The Archbishop (of Aix) has very elevated notions; but the more testy he is, the more you should stick to him, like a horse that flings—but, above all things, entertain no malice. I perfectly comprehend the impossibility of not entertaining three or four people as you do; this is the only means of pleasing them all, conferring so many favours, and lessening your expence. The Chevalier, when melancholy, is somewhat too rigid and severe; if he were there, I am sure he would act as you do. Remember me in a friendly manner to Madame de Langlee, as she is kind enough not to forget me: it is true that I did admire the choice and taste of her dress. I am more satisfied than I was, to find that M. d'Avaux thinks of your ribbon, as it looked as if he had forgot you.

Madame de Maintenon is going to make her young ladies represent Esther. It was too pleasant in you to read in public my account of the Chevalier. You do just what you please with me and my letters. Adieu, my most amiable girl, I am as you left me, except that,

instead of having each day the repeated happiness of seeing you here, I often sigh with much affliction at not finding you here any longer. I very much questioned whether you would be of our opinion concerning your brother.

LETTER DCXLV.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday January 21, 1689.

THE courier is not yet arrived, and I never met with any friendship so tender, permanent, or agreeable, as that which you entertain for me: I sometimes reflect how much that state, the sweetnes of which I now taste, has ever been solely the thing passionately desired. You merit your son's kindest affection, in the manner I love you and you love him. He does not impart to you his feelings; I scolded him for the simple account he gave you the day before yesterday. The Chevalier shewed him your letter concerning him—it were enough to melt one with tenderness and gratitude—was there ever a heart like thine, or such perfect maternal fondnes? Your prelates have been willing to judge of their situation, from the effect of their letters; but we form a better judgment of this matter here; the very shadow of the proposition has been banished*; but be assured, the nephew would have been fond to enjoy a good stomach; and the uncle either governed, or was no longer capable of knowing the things of this world. In fine, nothing could have been worse imagined, nor an opposition to an affair of this kind worse timed, which deserves only to be buried in oblivion; and I am well pleased with myself, for having always considered it in this light. M. d'Avaux informed me, that he thought your ribbon had been sent; a cold has prevented his going to Versailles, we shall know from him whether the courier has been drowned, or what has happened. He admires the tranquillity of not requesting it by a billet from M. de Chateuneuf; but I neither dared do it, or propose it.

Your

* The object was commandant of the King's orders, the survivorship of which the Archbishop of Arles, aged 86, had requested for his coadjutor and nephew.

Your son is taken up with preparations for a masquerade on Sunday at the Palais Royal ; the Duke de Chartres has desired his company ; Madame d'Escars has been giving her advice, as well as Madame de Meri ; you are acquainted with the operations of these great affairs. He is gone to Madame de Bagnol's with Sanzei. It is said that marshal d'Estrees is going to Brest ; the pretence of the sea renders this news insupportable ; he is going to make a tour throughout Britany, just as if it were the spring of the year, and he in the spring of his life ; such journies are very fatiguing. Acquaint me with Paulina's humour ; if she hath not been properly brought up, it is still in your power to make a just impression on the wax that is not yet hardened, but will take any form you please. I have seen M. de Barillon, who is grown very fat, and he inquired after your welfare ; he met your son at M. de Louvoi's ; his little face appeared to him so noble and pretty, that he inquired his name, when being informed, he embraced your son five or six times upon that score, and it made him recollect father, mother, and grandmother. Adieu, my dear child, it is impossible for me to tell you how much I am your's.

LETTER DCXLVI.

To the Same.

Paris, January 24, 1689.

YOUR river Durance hath at length let our letters pass ; the frost must have been very intense to have stopt the rapidity of its course. We had very severe weather, very severe frosts, and yet I never have caught cold. I have several times kept the Chevalier's chamber ; and, to speak like Madame de Coulanges, no one but him had reason to complain of the inclemency of the season ; but to speak more ingenuously, it did not appear to me that he was displeased at my presence. It now thaws ; but I am so very well, that I dare not take any physic, because I cannot hope to be better, and such a precaution appears to me ingratitude to Providence. The Chevalier is no longer afflicted with any pains ; but he dares not yet risk going to Versailles. I must relate to you a good thing Madame

de Coulanges said, which made me laugh, and I thought it pleasant. M. de Barillon is beyond himself, to meet with all his old friends ; he frequently visits Madame de Fayette and Madame de Coulanges ; he said the other day to the last, “ Ah ! Madam, how agreeable your house is to me ! I shall be very happy to visit you in the evening, when tired of my family.” “ Sir, said she, *I shall expect you to-morrow.*” This stroke was so quick, that we all joined in a general laugh.

Your son was last night at the Duke of Chartres’s ball, he was very pretty, and he will acquaint you with its success. You must not, however, reckon upon his reading ; he owned to us yesterday, very sincerely, that he is at present incapable of paying proper attention ; his youth hurries him away, and he does not understand what he reads. We are afflicted that he has not at least an inclination for reading, and he rather wants disposition than time for books. His frankness prevented our scolding him ; I do not know what we did not say to him ; I mean the Chevalier, myself, and Corbinelli, who was rather warm upon the occasion ; but we should not fatigue or constrain him ; it will come about, my dear, for it is impossible that with so much wit and good sense, with a fondness for war, he should have no inclination to know what were the exploits of the heroes of antiquity, and particularly *Cesar at the head of his Commentaries.* We must have patience, and do not fret—he would be too perfect were he fond of reading.

You astonish me at Paulina—my dear girl, keep her with you ; think not that the convent can redress the errors of education or religion, with which the sisterhood are very little acquainted, as well as most other things. You will do much better at Grignan, when you will have time for application. You will make her read good authors ; even the Abbadie * itself, as she has sense ; you will talk with her, and M. de la Garde will assist you—I am convinced that this is preferable to a convent.

* James Abbadie, a protestant minister, author of a treatise in great esteem among the lovers of truth and the Christian religion.

As to the peace with the Pope, the Abbe de Bigorre assures us that it is far from being concluded ; that the holy father will give up nothing, and that it is generally believed that M. de Lavardin and the Cardinal d'Estrees will return immediately ; avail yourself, then, of the time which God, who extracts good from evil, has sent you †. The aged Sanguin is dead, and departed this life like a heroin, walking about her chamber to the last moment, willing to examine death to his full extent. A compliment should be paid to M. de Senlis and M. de Livri ; but not by letter, for they are already consoled ; you alone, my dear child, would be deaf to the reasonableness of the order established since the creation of the world. You paint Madame d'Or in such colours, that she appears to me very amiable ; she should be taken, if her father were tractable : but what a rage to love none but one's self, to think ourselves every thing, to be divested of a consideration so sagacious, natural, and christian, as that of settling children ! You are very sensible that I can scarce comprehend this injustice ; it is a happiness that we should turn precisely where it ought to be directed. I have made an answer to M. de Carcassonne, which the Chevalier has greatly approved, and which he calls a master-piece. I have turned him to my advantage, and as I keep him at fifty leagues distance from me, I tell him all I think : I tell him he should not estrange himself from his affairs ; that he should make himself acquainted with them, calculate, suppose, and regulate them ; take his measures ; know what can and what cannot be done ; that such steps alone will enrich him ; and that by pursuing them, nothing can prevent his compassing every thing, duties, pleasures, and the sentiments of his heart for a nephew, whose only resource he is ; that we may go a great way with regularity ; that otherwise we can do nothing, and are only wanting in every thing ; and here the enthusiasm of tenderness seizes me for you and M. de Grignan, his son and family, for that name

† This circumstance gave rise to M. de Grignan's commanding for the King in Provence.

which he should support ; and I add, that I am inseparably attached to them, and that my greatest grief is, that I can do nothing more for you ; but that I charge him with it, and that I implore God to communicate all my sentiments to his heart, in order to double and increase those which he already possesses ; in a word, my child, this letter is better arranged, though written with impetuosity. The Chevalier's eyes grew red with reading it ; and as to me, I wounded myself so much with my own sword, that I wept with all my heart. The Chevalier told me there was nothing more to be done than send it, which was accordingly done.

You paint your pedant so pleasantly, that he makes me call to mind the doctor in the comedy, who wants to be perpetually speaking. It should seem to me, if you had time, you might derive some advantage from this library ; as it contains things in great plenty, we are free to choose which we please ; but, alas ! my child, you have not time to avail yourself of the excellence and extent of your understanding ; you make use of nothing but what is good and solid ; this is very well ; but it is a pity that every part is not employed ; I think M. Descartes will hereby be a very considerable loser.

Marshal d'Estrees is going to Brest ; this gives us some apprehensions that he will have the command of the regular troops there ; I, nevertheless, think that the governor will be, in some measure, countenanced, and that he will not be entirely disgusted. M. de Charot is returned for an instant, to justify himself concerning a hundred things that M. de Laufun has improperly said with respect to the state of the place, and the reception he gave the Queen ; he has shewn that his conduct has been quite the reverse of what it was represented by M. de Laufun. This does no honour to the latter, whose good stars seem to be stopped in their course by *Mademoiselle's* anger ; he has neither apartments nor entrance ; he is simply at Versailles.

We

We fear that you should be surprised by the subtlety of the Archbishop (of Aix); but I answer for the contrary, as no one weighs more his words than you, upon things of consequence. Madame Coulanges desires to be remembered in the most friendly manner to you—she would be for ever writing to you. Since I have been talking with the Chevalier, I find you will not have your ribbon, till after the second of February, by reason that your information did not come to hand till after New-year's day—such is the rule. He should have a good deal of news for you, as he has seen Dangeau, who is very intelligent. M. de Chaulnes will not be mortified on the score of the marshal d'Estrees; as he has nothing to do but with maritime affairs on the sea-coasts.

LETTER DCXLVII.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday January 26, 1689.

CORBINELLI has been delighted with your natural picture of the pedant: you talk of painting, that you have given of this man, seized and possessed with his own knowledge, who allows neither himself, nor any one else to breathe, and who will, at all events, support the conversation—I say, my dear girl, *this is a Titian.* I supped the night before last with Madame de Coulanges and those good Duchesses *; Barillon was there; he drank your health with an air of adoration for Madame de Sevigne and Madame de Grignan: he is not changed for the worse, after ten years embassy.

Madame d'Acigne came to see me yesterday; she informed me that M. de Richelieu was a Candlemas knight, as well as M. de Grignan and several others, whose attestations did not come to hand before New-year's day. Tilladet will be created a knight on that day, and the others will be proposed to the chapter; your ribbon will be sent at the same time: this is the truth, which we did not know before.

* The Duchesses de Chaulnes and du Lude.

You are very uneasy about this poor Chevalier, whose pains have entirely subsided ; he was visiting all day yesterday with his nephew ; he carried him to the marshal de Lorges, M. de Pomponne's, the Marquis d'Huzelles, and he thinks of going to Versailles ; in this manner are all his notions confused and misplaced. Your son diverts himself, he looked very handsome in his masquerade dress. Sanzei and he agree very well together ; there does not seem to be any aversion, envy, or pique between them ; they testify no great fondness for the little girls, they only play together like children ; I cannot conceive how these boys are made, they think of nothing but their equipages. Sanzei will set out on Monday for Poitou, to endeavour to get some money ; he will go by the way of Autri, and from thence to join his regiment of dragoons, which is twelve leagues from his estate ; such is his destiny, and he will immediately make his campaign : God preserve these poor children. Yours has every day the pleasure of hearing his company praised, that is to say, your company. All that have seen him compliment him upon it. The Chevalier can tell you, as well as me, that M de Lamoignon has no intention of marrying his daughter so soon. Several marriages are spoken of ; but they must be nearer a conclusion before I can mention them to you.

Marshal d'Estrees is going to Brest, to have the command of maritime affairs, and the sea-coasts, with some troops. God preserve us from any broil that may render it necessary for him to take the sole command. We hope that such a disgust will not be given to our governor, and that the employments will be divided, as Britanny is sufficiently extensive. Perhaps the Prince of Orange will not have time this year to turn his thoughts to France ; he has occupation enough in England and Ireland, where they are inclined to take up arms for the K. Our seas are all in motion ; there is nothing but your Mediterranean that is in a state of tranquillity. I know not how far the extravagant vows of your women will prevail ; I would add that they should eat no more oranges, and banish the orange-tree and colour ; these whims should be exhibited upon our

our coasts. I am, indeed, of opinion that the K. and Q. of E. are better at St. Germain, than in their perfidious kingdom. The K. of E. calls M. de Lau-
sun his governor; but he governs only this King, and
his favour is not very great. These Majesties have
accepted of all the King would give them, only fifty
thousand livres a month, and will not live like sove-
reigns; many English are come over to them, other-
wise they would not take so much; in a word, they
pursue a plan of life likely to continue. They have
made me call to mind my dear romances; but a little
turn for play is necessary. Here I just compleat your
acknowledgments as I formerly compleated your ro-
mances, and the friendship of your dogs. La Chau-
is upon the point of setting out; I send a little holy
ghost to M. de Grignan; I would have it fly upon
his coat, at the same time that the courier, who car-
ries the ribbon, arrives. I entreat you, my dear Count,
to accept this small present, it is to make some re-
paration for the insult my daughter sometimes offers
you, in mentioning me, instead of you. These are
strange presents, a ribbon, a girdle, a little pigeon, a
shadow, a breath, a nothing; this is what we give,
when we have nothing more to give: I have examin-
ed all the effects and consequences on one side only,
and I remain firm, saying to myself, well, be it so—If
I am slighted, if I am ruined, God may choose to
turn this ingratitude to my advantage, and render it
the source of my retreat from the world, and thereby
my salvation; and in this opinion, I have not re-
pented of any thing I have done: your friendship, and
the disposition of your heart for me, make my life
too happy; but, my dear girl, you are sometimes too
far from me, and I am most sensibly affected at this
absence.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday January 28, 1689.

I AM charmed at the distant correspondence you carry on with this good governor ¶, who reveres you, and gives me a thousand testimonies of his friendship upon every occasion. His wife is incessantly praising you, and thanking you for your remembrance, and she entreats me to say a thousand kind things to you for her. She is gone to Versailles, where she will see the Q. of E. and she will, doubtless, tell me many things that I shall relate to you.

The comedy † or tragedy of Esther has already been represented at St. Cyr. The King judged it to be admirable. The Prince shed tears. Racine never produced a finer piece, or one that was more affecting: Esther's prayer for Ahassuerus, is enchanting. I was in pain to think a little girl should represent this King, but they say she does it very well. Madame de Caylus performs Esther, and acts better than Champmele; if this piece is printed, I will send it you immediately. They want to carry the Abbe Tetu to see it; he is, really, to be pitied; every day his disorder encreases; opium has lost its soporific power, and it makes him only a little easy: this greatly excites our compassion, and yet he goes and comes. I acquainted him with all your regard, and he strenuously entreated me to testify all his acknowledgments.

The marriage of M. de Rouci * approaches, to my great surprise, as there is to be no *tabouret*. Madame de Marck is to wed M. de Brionne—another matter of wonder,

¶ The Duke de Chaulnes, who was in his government in Britanny.

† All theatrical pieces were, till then, comprised under the title of comedy.

* Francis de Roie de la Rochefoucauld, Count de Rouci, wedded the 8th of February following, Catharine-Frances d'Arpajon, daughter to the Duke of that name, and of Catherine Henrietta d'Harcourt.

wonder, on account of the lady's age †, which is said to be upwards of thirty. It is whispered that M. de Mertain and Madame d'Usez ‡ are to come together: and fame unites M. de Crussol § with Madame de Ventadeur ||; but I vouch for none of these reports.

I am now in the Chevalier's apartment; he is in his chair stamping with his left foot. I ask him "what news is there, Sir?" "There is no truth in intelligence, he replies; *God is God*, Madame, that *is all I know*." I am inclined to be as little communicative as himself; and to take my leave of you after having communicated to you this truth.

M. de Charot is here, and he has completely justified himself, with regard to all that M. de Lausun underhand said of him. He will be created a Chevalier at Candlemas. The King has sent old Courtebonne from Calais to Hesdin; this is his son's government, but he keeps his salary: he is replaced by Laubanei, a good officer, under the command of M. de Charot, to whom the King has greatly softened this change; and he will not return till the expiration of two months. Every one has his afflictions: I am frequently in company, when it is said the commandant of Provence is alone exempt from them, his situation being fine and agreeable. It is a pity that this does not agree with every thing that is given out here: we must, however, enjoy this distinction, and the peace and tranquillity that reigns in this province alone. I am as much astonished as you are, that your women should

† This marriage did not take place. Madame de la Marck, married March 7 of the same year, James Henry de Durfort, Duke de Duras.

‡ Louisa Catherine de Crussol d'Usez, did not marry till November 1690, with Lewis Francis de Tellier, Marquis de Barbisieux.

§ Lewis, Marquis de Crussol, afterwards Duke d'Usez, died in 1693 a bachelor.

|| Anne Genevieve de Levi was married February 16, 1691, to Lewis Charles de la Tour de Bouillon, Prince of Turenne, who fell at Steinkirk in 1692, and she wedded a second husband February 15, 1694, Hercules-Meriade de Rohan, Duke de Rohan-Rohan.

should disguise themselves and make vows * : it is for ours to tremble, and not *game*. I never knew such strange fears. Adieu, my dear child, I do not tell you how much I love you, since you already know it.

Eight at night.

Your hopes of Madame Coulanges writing to you, have been too greatly prolonged ; it is time she should convince you that she has something more than a good intention in this respect.

Madame de Coulanges.

Madame de Sevigne would never have me write to you, Madame ; she does not comprehend that one can be entirely taken up with you ; I never saw such a woman. I nevertheless acquaint you, that if you have a mind to pay your court, you should desire to see Esther ; you know what Esther means, all persons of merit are charmed with it, and you will be more charmed than any other. It is not coming from Grignan to lie at Versailles ; I should be very happy to be of the party ; for I do not believe any one can more ardently desire your company than I do. This counsel I could not help giving you, well knowing, Madame, that if Madame de Sevigne were left to herself, she would always forget you. I can never end this compliment without embracing M. de Grignan, this is a right to which I shall always lay claim ; I will embrace him notwithstanding his holy ghost. Madame de Frontenac, and Madame d'Outrelaise desire me to say a great deal upon their account. The poor Abbe Tetu is incessantly troubled with vapours ; I do all I can to cure him, but without success. M. de Coulanges says he cannot have the honour of writing to you, because he has a pain in his foot ; he imagines he has the gout, and he cries out like a madman ; and all this only to take off the Chevalier de Grignan.

LET

* These vows were to wear white, violet, or dun, &c, not to wear spectacles, and abstain from play.

LETTER DCXLIX.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday January 31, 1689.

YES, surely, I do seem to be in pain at your sore throat ; nor can I tell you how much this letter of the 24th, by which I am acquainted with your recovery, makes me breathe freely ; so that I am as easy as absence will allow me to be ; for I must acknowledge, fancy is a cruel tormentor, and greatly insults our weakness at this time. But preserve your health, if you love me, and you are willing that we both should be well ; mine seems entirely disposed to your pleasure, so much is it in waiting and perfect. I am going, upon your recommendation, into the Chevalier's apartment, that poor little room that so naturally attracts me, which I have visited for upwards of ten years, and where I am still well received. This Chevalier will go very soon to Versailles ; he is very well, with which I am greatly pleased, and yet the tedious hours which I must endure in his absence, present me with a dreary prospect. We rally together, we talk about you, and I am, as it were, fallen from the clouds, when he is not here : your son has been a courtier these three days : the Duke de Charot, who is here, and has seen him, gave me yesterday a very good account of him.

Madame de Chaulnes has seen the Q. of E. with whom she is greatly pleased ; the little Prince was dressed like a merry-andrew ; but he is handsome and lively, and is taught to dance : these are the truly happy days of infancy. The histories which we again read an account of this event, are replete with the perfidy of the people. The P. of O. is not quite at his ease in London, there being three parties ; that of the King and the Bishops, which is very small ; that of the P. of Orange, which is very great ; and a third, consisting of republicans and nonconformists. All Ireland is in the interest of the King ; he would have done well to have escaped thither : he is not so much beloved as the Queen. He calls M. de Lausun his governor ; the governor stands in great need of one himself ; *Mademoiselle*

demoiselle triumphs. The marshal d'Estrees is set out for Brest and the sea-coasts. M. de Chaulnes vigilance and services give great content; he is as active as a man of twenty-five.

I do not think that your journey to Avignon can ever take place at a better time; its being Lent is a favourable circumstance; the air is very serene there, and the Pope will, from the favourable light in which he views you, let you long enjoy your income. You should laugh at the news of the *seat of sinners* *; the carrying off the Princess of Orange, and the taking of her husband, are risible reports; to these, let us add the siege of Bois le Duc, which was only a pleasantry: every thing is yet calm, and nothing but diversions are thought of. The King and the whole court are delighted with the tragedy of Esther. Madame de Miramion § and eight Jesuits, amongst whom was father Gaillard, honoured it with their presence at the last representation: in a word, this is Racine's masterpiece; if I were pious, I should be ambitious of seeing this piece. The Princess de Conti is still an advocate for the opera; this, they say, is because it breathes nothing but love, which is now quite out of fashion.

M. de Charot has had a charming conversation with the King; it seems that M. de Lauzun has fruitlessly endeavoured to do him ill offices, this does no honour to a man, whom the King knows hath always loved and served him as a bosom friend. The reason of Courtebonne's removal from Calais is on account of his great age, and lest he should not be sufficiently vigilant. The King removes him to Hesdin, his son's government, and sends Laubanie, who is a good active officer, to Calais. M. de Charot told the King he was very well satisfied with these dispositions; that he would zealously unite with Laubanie, of whose knowledge and experience he should be very glad to avail himself; and that the good of the service should be the sole object of his pursuits. The King seemed very well pleased

* This was a place of meeting every morning at Aix, where all the most false and absurd reports were propagated.

§ A lady famous for her piety, and for the great number of her good works and foundations.

pleased with his manner of speaking. M. de Charot will return this Lent to Calais; in the mean time he will be created a knight, and will not oppose the proposition made to the chapter of M. de Grignan; after which the holy ghost will fly straightway to you.

I know not what is become of all the marriages of which I spoke to you. M. de Mirepoix's becomes very gloomy. The Dutchesse (de la Ferte) says I am quite exhausted, I can neither feed nor lodge them; people say to her, why do you ruin yourself? Madame de Mirepoix says, I will take and support them; the little girl cries; in a word I never saw a doll married, or such a ridiculous marriage; and was not he one of the best bred men in France? My dear child, compare not your heart with that of any one else; God has given you one that has no imperfection, and thank him for the same; your humours were a mere vapour, a mist before the sun; but those of other people are spoiled at the very root and bottom; so that you will never serve them as an apology.

LETTER DCL.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday February 2, 1689.

THIS day, according to all appearances, you were to be admitted by the chapter with some other followers; and I doubt not but the messenger will set out to-morrow to carry you your ribbon, as well as that of M. de Monaco. This was the bird-lime to which your pigeon's wing stuck; your acts of faith and attestations of life and manners, did not come to hand but the very day on which the first chapter was held. You do too much honour to Mary de Rabutin-Chantal to take her part, and defend her cause: but do you know if Jane Fremiot were living, she would scold you well? She was daughter to two or three presidents—what do you take us for? and *Berbis* on her mother's side. After one law-suit, it is time to think what one is about.

Do not fatigue yourself, my dear girl, in writing long letters; you cannot doubt but that they are agreeable to me, but then they destroy you, tell me only of the state of your health; your particular business; your

intentions

intentions—these things are, indeed, too dearly united to my heart to be passed over: let me chatter, but you need not answer; refer me, with regard to certain particulars, to the Chevalier; in a word, I only want to know about your health and your welfare. So you have been terrified by some little *black owls**; I had some apprehensions upon this head, and could not help laughing to myself; you think they have a mournful look, but they do not pout †, nor have they the voice of a shrew; and when you are acquainted with their abilities, you will find that instead of being of evil portent, they confer beauty, at least to the head-dress.

The Q. of E. seems rather more inclined, if it pleased God, to reign in the fine kingdom of England, where the court is large and handsome, than to be at St. Germain's, though overwhelmed with the heroic bounties of the King. As to the K. of E. he seems contented there, and it is for that reason he is there. I embrace my most amiable Countess, and the Count, in honour of the festival; and for the same reason I must take my leave, to go to vespers and the sermon. I read with pleasure the *Christian rules* § of M. le Tourneux; I only looked at them upon Madame de Coulanges table, they are now upon my own.

LETTER DCLI.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday February 4, 1689.

I EXPECTED the Chevalier and your son last night. I know that you have sent your brevet to take your blue ribbon, and that to-day the ribbon and crofs, which the King hath given, will be sent to you—now, then, I am easy. Take special care of this charming ribbon, *ad multos annos*, decorate your fine shape with it, and do not forget it for three hours which you destine every day for love; it is an ornament that should accompany the harmony of this faithful passion; my daughter seems so contented with it, that I may enter into this confidence. I am thus insensibly speaking to you, my dear

* A fashionable hood of that time.

† See La Fontaine's fable of the eagle and owl.

§ Rules and Principles of a Christian Life, first printed in 1688.

dear Count, and I find myself compelled to embrace you, to close my discourse.

Now, my daughter, I return to you. It appears to me that the Chevalier may very well have stayed at St. Cyr, if he went thither, and Madame Maintenon sends every one thither of profound wisdom: for instance, Racine mentioned to her M. de Pomponne, she and the King both startled with surprize, and his Majesty ordered him to go thither. The illustrious Pomponne went accordingly yesterday: I shall not conclude this letter till I have seen him, and till the Chevalier and your son are returned: thus, my dear girl, do I ballot. Madame de Chaulnes and I supped on Wednesday night upon Madame de Coulanges genuine pullet, in Coulanges closet, who has the gout like a little debauchee; he roars out, and is carried upon a man's back, he sees company, is in pain, and does not sleep; but all this is done through mere pleasantry: he is not even seriously in pain.

I dined yesterday at Madame de la Fayette's, with Treville and Corbinelli; we had some partridges from Auvergne, and some pullets from Caen; his son, who you know is the Marquis's spy, told me he did very well, that he had a good air, kept good company, eat at good tables, that he was much beloved, that they sometimes called him in raillery the *little be cat* *; others who were more polite, called him, on account of his youth, *puss*. In fine, this seems to be all very well: the Chevalier has sent me the same account; look you, here is his letter, this panegyric, which is so natural, will give you pleasure. You will not be displeased to know the difference between good and bad company. M. Louvois said the other day, very loud to M. de Nogaret, "Sir, your company is in a very bad condition." "Sir, said he, I did not know it." "You should know it," said M. de Louvois, "have you seen it?" "No, Sir," said Nogaret. "You should have seen it, Sir." "Sir, I will give orders." "Orders should have been given; one should act consistently, Sir, either declare one's self a courtier, or perform one's duty

as

* Madame de Sevigne had formerly called her grandson Puss.

as an officer." This must be very cutting to Madame de Cauvifson * ; she now sees the consequence of neglecting the service ; and you should be very happy in the thought of the Marquis's fine, handsome company, which is of your creation ; also of his punctuality and frankness, as well as his journey to Chalons ; this is acquitance for all your trouble and his. This dialogue I had from the Chevalier ; but as he tells me he does not transmit you these kind of details, I thought I should divert you by relating them.

Madame de la Fayette, who never sleeps, and who is in a bad state of health, sends you a thousand friendly compliments. M. de Treville insures your wit and beauty, by his peculiar admiration. Madame de Lavardin places in the first rank of her praises, the heroic fortitude you had to depart at the same time as your son for Philipsburg : in a word, my dear child, your modesty would have been laid under some contributions.

M. de la Vieuville is dead. He is the first who has diminished the number of knights. Benserade says, that there can be no governors raised for M. de Chartres §.

Friday 2 o'clock, afternoon.

This instant, my dear girl, I see Poirier coming into the room with your blue ribbon. There is the billet the Chevalier has wrote, by which you will find that these gentlemen are not tired of Versailles ; that the Chevalier is ravished and transported with Esther ; and that he thinks it proper to send you your ribbon by the post, in the same manner as that of M. de Monaco. I am now going to M. Orceau's, to recommend to him the care of my little box. The Chevalier has performed his duty very well at Versailles, and now I am going to perform mine, which leaves me only the glory of telling

* Mother to M. de Nogaret.

§ Charles Duke de la Vieuville, who died February 2, 1689, was appointed February 28, 1686, governor to Philip, Duke de Chartres, afterwards Duke of Orleans, and regent. He succeeded Godfrey, Count d'Estrades, marshal of France, who after being appointed governor of this Prince in 1685, died February 26, 1686 ; so that the Duke de Chartres lost two of his governors in less than four years.

telling you, that I am not displeased at transmitting you this fortunate ribbon. Put it on speedily without ceremony; when you are received Chevalier, you will do like the rest. I embrace you, my dear child, with all my heart, as you have no reason to doubt.

LETTER DCLII.

To the Count de Grignan.

Paris, Monday, February 7, 1689.

GOOD day, Count, are you finely decorated? have you a good air? methinks the blue ribbon sits very well upon you. I pay you my compliments, and embrace you with this new ornament.

To Madame de Grignan.

I went on Friday to M. de Pomponne's, after having sealed my letter; he was returned from St. Cyr. Madame de Vins must have acquainted him with the name Madame de Maintenon gave him, and how he received orders to attend the fine tragedy the next day. The King told him in the morning that he was very capable of judging, and that he would doubtless be pleased. M. de Pomponne was highly satisfied. Racine has outdone himself, he loves God as he did his mistresses, he is the same, as to holy matters, as he was with respect to profane things; the holy scripture is strictly followed in this piece, every thing is fine, every thing is great, every thing is treated with dignity. You have seen what the Chevalier wrote to me; his praises and tears are agreeable. The K. and Q. of E. were at the representation of it on Saturday; would to God, my dear girl could have been present!

Your long letter has given me great pleasure, and answers very well to all the articles in mine; but, child, it is too long, though it be written with wit, and a swiftness that the hand evinces. I cannot help feeling some anxiety at the number of letters that you write, and at your long residence in your closet, from whence you must retire with a great pain in your back, a violent one in your head, and much exhausted; so that the pleasure I receive in reading your letters is always blended with some chagrin, like every thing else in life.

For

For instance Avignon, which I do not mention for the reasons you have given, is nevertheless a good place, and comes very *a propos* for your child; this is a paternal providence, for which we should thank God; and, on the other hand, the wind, the tempests, the hurricanes, the devils let loose to fly away with your castle, have occasioned an unexpected expence of a thousand crowns. Why did not this dæmon carry away the ruined building of Carcassonne? where was the Coadjutor?—Ah! my dear girl, what havock, what universal shocks, what terror every where spread! you paint this horrid scene like Virgil; but there was no one present to say *quos ego*—this storm has been spoken of here. The Bishop of Languedoc writes to Coulanges, that he was under apprehensions for the castle of Grignan. God preserve you from ever passing a winter there, whilst there remains any other place or city in France.

I cannot refrain saying a word or two more upon this marriage *, which becomes every day more ridiculous. The mother leaves them, because she says she is ruined. I cannot help thinking what the Duke de F. says is very pleasant, and that he is in the right; the wisdom and pride of M. de M. need not frighten them, as he is their kinsman. At length the marriage of Madame de Coissin with M. de Enrichemont seems almost concluded; they have sent to Rome, which is something. Madame d'Arpajon is betrothed to-day at Versailles to the Count de Rouci: it is said that he told Madame d'Arpajon; “ Notwithstanding you are ugly, Miss, I cannot help loving you.” All the other matches I mentioned to you are not certain. I expect our courtiers to-morrow. It is to be hoped that your son will some time or other be fond of reading; nothing but this hope prevents my being afflicted; his youthful pranks entirely engage him, and take up all his time.

You mention Britanny, and you set forth all the reasone that should induce me to go thither. It is true that M. de Chaulnes writes to me incessantly to intreat me to go with Madame de Chaulnes, who will set out this Lent with two coaches; he promises to compleat

all

* See the letters of January 10, 19, 31.

all my busines for me, and to bring me back after the States adjourn, so that I can never have a better opportunity. Madame de Chaulnes, on her side, solicits me, as you believe. I have, moreover, a real occasion to finish in that country two or three affairs with the Abbe Charier, who desires me not to lose the opportunity of his stay in Britanny, which will not continue much after the rising of the States ; he will then repair to Lyons, and offer to accompany me to Grignan : such, my dear girl, is my situation ; put yourself in my place, figure to yourself the circumstances and opportunities that offer, and then give me your advice ; for I will have your approbation, and I entreat you to believe, that after this necessary journey for my business, I shall be entirely yours, as my heart and inclination compel me.

Paulina is not then perfect ; I should never have thought that the chief of her imperfections, would have been ignorance in point of religion ; you must instruct her, which you are very capable of doing, it is your duty, and you have good books to assist you : and, in return, your sister-in-law the abbess will teach her the world. Your opinion of M. de Lausun must be raised, the King has admitted him again to court ; this is a great object which surprizes all the world, and which enrages the princess. He had said that Calais was in a very bad condition, and the governor * had given a very ill reception to the Queen : M. de Charot has proved both assertions to be false. I saw Corbinelli at Madame Coulanges, he has got Molinos † in his head. Adieu, my dear child, I am entirely yours, which is an improper way of expressing one's self.

LETTER DCLIII.

To Madame de Grignan.

Paris, Wednesday February 9, 1689.

OUR two Grignans are returned, which charms me ; their absence was very tedious to me ; your son is too handsome, I scarce dare tell you so, as I know it hurts you. He is quite habituated to the court,

he

* Armand de Bethune, Duke de Charot.

† A Spanish priest, author of a new mystical doctrine, known by the name of Quietism.

he is delighted with being there, and is beloved by all the world. The Chevalier is entirely satisfied with him. You are much in the right, to prefer so many good qualities to the height of his shape ; but he is not short, he will, at least, be the size of the Chevalier ; and his figure is, indeed, very noble and agreeable.

The Abbe Tetu gives you a thousand thanks for your kindness ; he has carried his vapours to Versailles ; he has mentioned me to Madame de Maintenon to see Esther : she gave him a more favourable answer than I deserved : I shall go to St. Cyr on Saturday or Tuesday, I shall speak of you, and pity your not being able to see this miracle ; there will be one every year for the consolation of the absentees.

Friday, February 11.

I have informed you how well satisfied M. de Charot is with his master, and his master with him ; and that M. de Lausun's assertions have done no harm to any one, but himself ; nevertheless he is admitted as before ; he is indebted for this, it is said, to the K. of E. Esther continues to be represented. Madame de Cailus, who was the Champmele of the performers, does not act any more : she was too good and too feeling an actres ; nothing but the purest simplicity of these little innocent souls is required ; I will give you a very good account of every thing. Madame de Chaulnes journey into Britanny, neither approâches, nor is it certain ; I will inform you from time to time of the situation of this affair.

Madame d'Arpajon is now Madame de Rouci : there is no talk of Madame de la Marck's marriage with any one. Coislin's nuptials have not yet taken place, *this child is very difficult to christen*. You are too lively upon the score of your disagreeable sermon ; it was sufficient to have set the convent on fire : you are in Provence obliged to listen to strange preachers. We were not under any uneasiness with respect to the tardiness of the courier ; but we should admire the accident that makes him miss just the day that we were more desirous than usual of receiving your letters ; whereupon the Chevalier said, *God is God*.

Nothing,

Nothing, my child, is more certain than that all your illness arises from writing too much ; you are sensible of it, but you will not own it. You should walk a little, and take the air when it is fine weather ; you have very delightful hours, as we have here, and now, for instance, it is very serene : the month of February is much finer than the month of May ; it must then be hot at Aix : let me advise you to take some exercise, for it is death to be always confined to your box of a cabinet : the thoughts of it stifle me.

I supped last night at M. de Lamoignon's with the Duches de Lude, who was returned from court, Madame de Coulanges, M. de Beauvais, and M. de Troyes. Whilst we were at supper, Madame de Meri disguised your son with some old black petticoats, which were put on so well, and made him appear such a whimsical figure, that every one spoke to him : he went to *Monsieur's*, who talked to him a good while without knowing him, as well as M. de Chartres ; he answered every one very smartly : this will teach him a little effrontery, though, in truth, the Chevalier will tell you he does not want for it. Adieu, my dearest and most amiable girl, you are going to Marseilles, there will you see, in my opinion, the finest *coup d'oeil* in nature.

LETTER DCLIV.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday February 14, 1689.

YOU dwell too much upon our uneasiness, it has not been so excessive ; when we know that no one had received any letters from Provence, we were under no apprehensions, and only concluded that the courier was not yet arrived. It is true we are not pleased with your sore throat, and less in the serene air of Aix than elsewhere, and as we were very desirous of hearing from you, your letters coming to hand gave us great pleasure ; all this is very natural, and what must have been your case. You say that you have been to blame, that you walked in the rain, which gave you cold ; we are of your opinion, and as we take your word for your being to blame, we cannot help scolding you

you—whereupon you scold us in turn, and so we go on. We are far from dissuading you to walk; quite the contrary, my dear girl; walk and take exercise, breathe the fine air you are in, do not always be immured in that dark palace *, nor in that box of a cabinet; use your horses, or else they will burst as well as yourself: but shut yourself up when it is cold, and you have a sore throat; and above all, do not repent of having made us privy to the state of your health; we love truth, and therefore, my dear, do not deceive us. M. du Bois, who is Madame de la Fayette's physician as well as mine, wants also to be yours; he wants to write to you, to prescribe for you bleeding in the foot, and then to take the herb periwinkle, which will restore your health and purify your blood: this, he says, is sound reason and a sure remedy. What greatly afflicts me, is the melancholy state of your castle, as well from the violence of the winds, as the rage of the Coadjutor, equally fatal as the storm; how great is his extravagance! to build and unbuild, just like the little girls who work upon a bit of canvas: he does exactly the same; he turns your house upside down it is a little Maintenon camp, the air of which will not be less fatal †. You should really come to Paris, as there is no place to lodge you securely. I do not believe M. de Grignan will let you pass the summer in so disagreeable a situation, so incommodious for you, and so pernicious to our health. I will tell you, daughter, what I think, some place of safety must be procured for you: but what does M. de Grignan say to this rage? I do not believe such a conduct can be paralleled, to come and overthrow the castle of his fathers, and to make it uninhabitable. I am going to write to M. de la Garde, I am persuaded he will be of our opinion.

I will not yet think upon the departure of our poor Grignans, this sensibly affects me; and I, with you,

* M. de Grignan lived at Aix in the old palace belonging to the Counts of Provence.

† The digging of the ground occasioned a general disorder among the troops in the camp of Maintenon, who were employed during the peace in the works carrying on for the canal from the river Eure, from the year 1681, to the year 1684.

you, admire the Chevalier's resolution: the God of hosts will support him, for nothing less will sustain him. Madame de Chaulnes informs me that I shall see Esther, that Madame de Coulanges is to accompany me to Versailles, and that we shall have her equipage, for I go only upon this condition. Wherefore I give the Chevalier his liberty, who was to have conducted me after dinner: he is going to pay his court, a commission I am charmed to think he can execute, but am chagrined it must be in leaving this little chamber, which is all that makes this dismal hotel de Carnavalet supportable and social; except this, every one is in his hole. Adieu, my dearest and most amiable girl, I embrace you a thousand times. My God, how rapidly does all your thoughts pass in review before me! how certain it is that I participate of every thing that interests you!

LETTER DCLV.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday February 16, 1689.

THE Chevalier is still at Versailles, but I expect him this evening. The Marquis dined the other day with me; I conversed a good deal with him, and I can assure you, I was greatly pleased with him. An air of truth and modesty runs through all he says, which does not in the least resemble the style of those young giddy people, who always appear either as fools or liars. He related to me all the fatigues of his journey from Philipsburg, which were very great; little d'Auvergne had the fever for four days, out of mere weariness; the Marquis is vigorous, and sustains very bravely this first trial; he related to me all his other adventures, an account of all the blows that were given on every side of him, and the contusion he received; and this, without any ostentation, with a cool sedate air of truth, which gives infinite pleasure. I love to converse with him, and he loses no opportunity of doing it; he supped yesterday with M. Turgot, and some young folks at little la Martilliere's who is so rich, and he returned at midnight. He is gone to the horse-market about his equipage; he will write to you to-night; he loves you, and is sensible of your extreme tenderness; you do no-

LETTERS OF THE

thing for him, with which he is not as much affected as you can desire ; he has no occasion to be reminded upon this subject.

I dined yesterday with Madame de Goileau ; this was a company of wits ; here were Abbe de Polignac, Abbe David, and Corbinelli ; after dinner they discussed, very agreeably, the philosophy of your father Descartes ; it was with much difficulty they were able to comprehend the motion given to a ball pushed by another, they were inclinable to think that the first communicated its motion, and you know the Abbe Polignac and Corbinelli must have roared upon the occasion ; this diverted me, and made me remember my dear little Cartesian, who I was so fond of listening to, though unworthily. From thence I went to Madame de la Fayette's, where, by good fortune, I met with nobody but M. de Pomponne, and M. de Barillon : here we passed two hours agreeably, and the more so, as we were very seldom so lucky. They say that the English parliament have made the Prince of Orange an elective King, saying that this here has deserted his kingdom, *and broke the treaty between Sovereign and subjects* ; that his flight is an *abdication* ; and that they are willing to render that kingdom elective. In fact, the parliament would not allow the Princess of Orange to be queen : these were the reports of yesterday. The Chevalier will bring us some news from Versailles. Some say with regard to the K. of E's. coolness, that when one hears him, one may easily know the cause of his being here.

I shall not go before Saturday to St. Cyr with M. de Lamoignan and Madame de Coulanges, who have promised to return with me. I shall give you an account of this journey. Madame de Chaulnes does not now make any mention of her's ; all I know is, that she would be very glad to take her ; I leave her to settle her affairs. I shall seal my letter to-night, after the Chevalier's return.

Eight o'clock at night.

The Chevalier is not arrived. I imagine he is willing to stay till all the general officers are named, to know each one's destination. I have seen Madame de Chaulnes and

and Madame de Coulanges, and they are quite charmed with Esther. The first embraces and loves you, and wants to take me with her into Britanny, and she asks your leave; but as she is here about some business, she will not set out so soon as expected. Madame de Coulanges has avenged your cause with Marshal d'Estrees lady *. She told her, finding her quite silent upon the panegyric of Esther, " You certainly, Madame, must have renounced ever praising any thing, as you do not praise this piece." Madame d'Estrees is enraged at Madame de Coulanges, who desires you to console yourself at not being praised by the marshal's lady, as she does not praise Esther.

LETTER DCLVI.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday February 18, 1689.

THE Chevalier returned pretty well last night; he has got an intermitting cold, and which, under the rose, appears to me a gouty humour. The Marquis, after having given orders for his equipage, is, in turn, going to pay his court, and pass two or three joyous days at Versailles. Madame de Coulanges is returned from thence and St. Cyr; she was perfectly well received there, seated next to Madame de Maintenon, and has laid in an additional stock of praises and news. She will return thither with me to-morrow, we wait for an answer; for the throng is so great, that I shall not think of going till I have set out. I informed you of what Madame de Coulanges said to Madame d'Estrees, the scene passed at M. de Croissi's, when the whole company burst a laughing, which disconcerted the marshal's lady, and encouraged Madame de Coulanges, who said in a low voice to M. de Charot; " Only think, she never would praise Madame de Grignan any more than Esther." Presently the conversation turned upon M. de Charot's *flames*. Madame de Coulanges mentioned Madame de Brissac †, and yourself. The

* Mary-Margaret Morin, wife to John, Count d'Estrees, marshal and vice-admiral of France.

† Gabrielle-Louisa de Saint Simon, Duchess of Brissac, died February 24, 1684.

poor man's taste was approved; but Madame d'Estrees was for applauding Madame de Brissac's wit, when Madame de Coulanges observed, "That as to wit, Madame de Grignan was as much superior to her, as the eyes of Madame de Brissac were above those of Madame de Grignan." Every one agreed, and Madame d'Estrees was again disconcerted. Canaples afterwards said, he had never seen any thing so handsome as you, and that Madame de Mazarin was of the same opinion, and that he had heard her say twenty times, that of all the faces she had ever seen, none pleased her so much as yours; that you had every kind of grace and proportion; this was agreed to. Madame d'Estrees did not dare open her mouth, and this mute lioness, *with her paws across*, like that which you formerly saw, appeared so new a prodigy, that no one could refrain speaking of her; and Madame de Coulanges was complimented for the working of a miracle, which nothing but her vivacity could have wrought. Madame d'Estrees complained in a whisper of the reproach she had received about Esther, and that it was intended as an affront. It must be owned, however, that Madame de Coulanges is an ungrateful woman, as the marshal's lady never tore her eyes out.

The Chevalier has wrote to you about England, we expect to hear what they have done, after having said that their King was no longer King, after he had left the kingdom; we should know whether they have elected another.

Nine o'clock at night.

At length we have received some news from England, which is very favourable. The Prince of Orange is not yet master: things are not done in such a hurry, and war will not be declared in a moment, as was imagined. It will not be so dreadful this year, as we are only upon the defensive: but you will have many pangs, many needless apprehensions, if you will not be diverted from them; you will not for one moment turn aside from the dragoons, which I see are ready to devour you; but our dragoons will not bite, for I find, my dearest child, that I am going into Britanny with

Madame

Madame de Chaulnes ; every thing induces me to take this journey : besides its being agreeable to me, I must necessarily look about the estate I have there, and which is dwindling to nothing, unless the capacity of the Abbe Charier and my presence can restore it. I must therefore have the resolution to undertake this journey, at the risk of my life, and the price of my affection, which would naturally hasten me to you, my dear Countess.

LETTER DCLVII.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday February 21, 1689.

IT is certain that we are most cruelly separated from each other : it is enough to make one shudder. I would have added to it the distance from hence to the Rocks or Rennes ; but this cannot take place so soon. Madame de Chaulnes wants to see the issue of many matters ; and I am only afraid that she will set out too late, considering my intentions of returning next winter, for several reasons ; the first of which is, I am thoroughly persuaded, that M^r de Grignan will be obliged to return to be created a Chevalier, and that you cannot take a better opportunity to escape from your falling, uninhabitable castle, and come and pay your court a little with the Knight of the Order, who will not be such till that time. I paid mine the other day at St. Cyr, much more agreeably than I expected. We went on Saturday ; that is, Madame de Coulanges, Madame de Bagnols, the Abbe Tetu, and myself. We found our places kept ; an officer told Madame de Coulanges, that Madame de Maintenon had ordered a place to be kept for her next herself ; you see what honour is paid her. As to you, Madame, said he, you may choose. I placed myself with Madame de Bignols, in the second row behind the Duchesses. Marshal de Bellefond came, and placed himself by choice on my right hand, and before were the Duchesses D'Auvergne, de Coislin, and de Sully. The Marshal and I listened to the tragedy with remarkable attention, paying it some eulogiums in a low voice, that were very well placed. I cannot acquaint you with the extreme harmony of this piece : it is a performance not easy

to represent, and is inimitable: it is the union of music, poetry, singing, and character, so perfect and complete, that it exceeds one's utmost wishes. It commands attention, and the only displeasure arising from it is, that so fine a production should come to a conclusion. It is fraught with innocence and simplicity, and it is at the same time sublime and affecting; the sacred history is so faithfully preserved, as to make it respectable; all the airs corresponding with the words, which are taken from the Psalms or Wisdom, are interwoven with the subject, and are singularly beautiful; the taste and attention of the audience ascertain the approbation the piece receives. I was delighted with it, as well as the Marshal, who quitted his box to acquaint the King how much he was satisfied, and that he was seated next a lady, who was very worthy of seeing the performance of Esther. The King approached our seat, and after having turned about, he addressed himself to me, saying, "Madame, I am informed the piece has given you satisfaction." I replied, without the least surprise, "Sire, I am delighted; what I feel is beyond the description of words!" The King said, "Racine is very sensible." And I replied, "Sire, he is indeed; but really, those young people are also very sensible: they enter into the subject as if it had been their sole employment." "As to that, he rejoined, it is true." And then his Majesty retired, leaving me the object of universal envy. As I was almost the only new spectator, the King took some pleasure in observing my sincere admiration, without noise or parade. The Prince and Princess came and spoke a word to me; Madame de Maintenon flashed upon me, and then retired with the King. I answered every one, being very happy. We returned at night with flambeaux. I supped at Madame de Coulanges, to whom the King spoke with an air of being at home, which gave him a very amiable sweetnes. I saw the Chevalier at night; I related to him quite naturally my little prosperities, not being willing to conceal them, without reason, as some people do. He was pleased, and here I conclude upon this head. I am assured he did not afterwards think I had been guilty of ridiculous vanity,

vanity, nor puffed up with the transports of a city lady—Ask him. M. de Meaux spoke to me a good deal about you, as did also the Prince. I pitied you for not being present; but how was it possible? one cannot be every where. You were at your opera of Marseilles. As *Atys* is not only *too happy*, but too charming, it is impossible you could have been tired with him. Paulina must have been surprised at such a spectacle; she has no right to wish for a more perfect one. I have so agreeable an idea of Marseilles that I am persuaded you are amused there; and I will back the dissipations of that place against those of Aix.

But that very Saturday, after the representation of charming Esther, the King was informed of the death of the young Queen of Spain *, who was carried off in two days, by a violent vomiting—this has very much the air of foul play. The King acquainted *Monsieur* with it the next day, which was yesterday; great was the grief upon the occasion. *Madame* wept bitterly, and the King retired in a flood of tears.

It is said there is good news from England; not only the P. of O. is not elected King nor Protector; but he is given to understand, that he and his troops have nothing to do but return—this shortens our solicitude. If this news should gain ground, our Britanny will be in less agitation, and my son will not have the mortification to command the nobility of the viscounty of Rennes, and the barony of Vitre. They have elected him, against his will, to be at their head. Another would be greatly elated with this honour; but he is much displeased, not liking, under any title whatever, to take the field on that side.

Your son is gone to Versailles, to divert himself during the carnival; but he has met with the queen of Spain's mourning. He would have returned e're this, if his uncle was not upon the point of going to meet him. This is a very sorrowful carnival, and a great mourning. I supped last night with M. Camus, the Lieutenant-Civil, where I met with the Duchess du Lude, Madame de Coulanges, Madame de St. Ger-

* Maria-Louisa of Orleans, daughter of Monsieur and of Henrietta-Ann of England, his first wife.

main, the Chevalier Grignan, M. de Trôyes and Corbinelli. We were very joyful; we spoke of you in a very friendly manner, and our esteem for you could not fail making us regret your absence: in a word, a lively remembrance of you brought it fresh to our minds.

Madame de Urfurt is dying of a malignant fever, and Madame de la Vieuville of the small-pox. Adieu, my most amiable girl; you may be persuaded that of all the provincial commanders M. de Grignan is the most agreeably situated.

LETTER DCLVIII.

To the Same.

Paris, A/S-Wednesday February 23, 1689.

MY dear child, the life you lead at Marseilles delights me. I love that city, which is a nonpareil. I perfectly understand Paulina's sincere admiration; how natural! how just! how novel all her surprises must be! how pretty I think her! her disposition greatly pleases me. Methinks I love her, and that you do not love her enough. You want her to be all perfection. Did she wager she would be such when she left her convent? You do not do her justice; for who is there without faults? Do you, in conscience, expect she should be without any? Whence can this hope arise? It is not in nature: you would then have her a *prodigious* prodigy, as never was seen. Methinks if I were with you, I should do her some good offices, in nothing more than correcting a little your imagination, and in asking you, if a young girl, who thinks of nothing but pleasing and improving, who loves and fears you, and who has a great share of wit, is not in the first rank of excellence? These are the dictates of my heart in favour of my dear Paulina, whom I love, and whom I entreat you immediately to embrace, for the love you bear me. Add to this her good conscience, which makes her renounce the compact, when she sees the conjurors perform their necromancies. This life, though agreeable, must have fatigued you: it is too much for you, my dear child; you go to bed late and you rise early: I have had some apprehensions for your health. The reason I don't talk to you about mine, is that

that it is such as I wish yours to be, and I have nothing to say upon that head.

You constantly think of me too obligingly: you reason very well upon my journey into Britanny, and I will consider of it; and if Madame de Chaulnes did not go —for what can one tell? We must see how the commands are disposed of; if, then, she did not go, I would go on my own account to Nantes, whether I would send for the Abbe Charier, as it is impossible to leave that estate any longer in its present confusion. We have time enough, at least till after Easter, we do not think of setting out during Lent. I think I have told you we supped last Sunday with the Lieutenant-Civil: on Monday we were at M. de Lamoignon's, with Coulanges, and the Abbe Bigorre, when we were very familiar. On Tuesday we were at Madame de Coulanges, with Madame de Chaulnes and *the Divines*, quite free, and retired about eleven. This morning I was at Ash-mass, and am now writing in much repose, to my dear girl. Such is the life of your poor mama, whilst the Chevalier and *Puss* are at Versailles, where all diversions have ceased to make way for the deep sorrow of *Monsieur* and *Madame* *. This poor Queen of Spain, a year older than her mother, died in the strange manner she did: she was taken, on the 10th of this month, with such an excessive and violent vomiting, that no remedy could afford her any relief, and until the 12th at noon, when she died, she had not one moment's time to breathe. M de Rabenac writes, that nothing is so worthy of admiration as her courage and resolution, with great sentiments of Christianity, telling the King she had no regret at quitting life, that she was dying of her natural death, though she had just before said, like the late *Madame* §; but like her too she repented of having said it: in a word, no mention is made of poison, this word is forbid at Versailles, and throughout France; but the poor Prince is dead, and this is a real loss in

* Elizabeth-Charlotte, Palatine of the Rhine, mother-in-law to the Queen of Spain.

§ Henrietta-Anne of England, first wife to *Monsieur*, who died at St. Cloud, June 29, 1670, of a violent colick, in the 26th year of her age.

the present state of affairs. Those of England are strangely spoken of; they have elected, after great opposition, that madman the P. of O. and he has been crowned; the contrary report prevailed a week ago—but all that can be said is, they are English.

Madame de la Vieuville † is dead of every kind of corruption, doubtless surprised to find herself so soon by the side of her father-in-law at the Minimes (*of the Place Royale*).

LETTER DCLIX.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday February 25, 1689.

OUR two Grignans returned from Versailles, an hour after I sealed my letter. The Chevalier will acquaint you how this captain took his leave, how the King looked at him with a good-natured air, how his company was inquired after, and his journey to Châlons. He will have the honour to set out the first, and to set the example; this zeal of a young novice is very proper; he rallies very prettily with those who ask why he sets out so soon, he tells them he has a colonel who hunts him; the colonel * defends himself very well on his part, and I can assure you nothing can be better, or do them so much honour at so little expence; he has no business, he is delighted with running about, and being a *martinet*; he will have time enough to repose himself at Philippeville, and as well as his equipage; and he will be quite fresh when he begins to march. I am become quite a miser with respect to *Puss*, which you know is always the case when the time of departure grows near; he is to eat with me; I shall carry him to dine with Madame de Chaulnes and Madame de Coulanges, to take his leave of them: and I shall husband the seven or eight days we have still to be together. But, my dear child, do not go far to seek anxiety; do not allow your fancy to make you uneasy; there is no reason for it at present, your son will be as well in his garrison as here; it is but fifty leagues off.

Letter

† Ann-Lucy de la Motte-Houdancourt.

* The Chevalier de Grignan.

Let me hear from you, my dear lady, your life at Marseilles appeared to me very agreeable. For my part, I acknowledge I should not have wit enough to be tired in the midst of the respect and sincere demonstrations you receive in your government; the Chevalier and I never agree upon this head. I very well know that you will think there is too much of it, and you must come and shake it off a little in this part of the world: but I see many people who would not think these honours paid once a year by people of rank and quality at all disagreeable; I have seen them, and I have been surprised and affected; but every one to her taste. I will stake the pretty whirlwind of Marseilles, with the Chevalier's opera * and necromancies, not forgetting Paulina's astonishment against visits, and the ladies of Aix. Tell me who are your court ladies, for there are always favourites.

It is said the K. of E. is going over to Ireland, this report is, at least, spread; but I vouch for nothing this year, it is the harvest of lies. The court goes into mourning to-day for the Queen of Spain. I shall finish this letter to-night, after yours comes to hand.

Here is your letter of the 18th, my dear child, but say nothing to M. de Grignan, for he would laugh at me. I am charmed to find you are arrived at Aix; I recollect there is a steep shocking precipice which extends a great way along the road, and which hurts me to think of it; your leagues are insupportable, it is as far from Marseilles to Aix, as it is from Paris to Meaux; yes, I maintain it; I therefore thank you for acquainting me with your arrival. You must have been very much fatigued to have supped with the Archbishop instead of going to bed. I am sensible of the pleasure you give M. de Grignan, in appearing in public with so good a grace: this complaisance entitles you to much from him. He was apprehensive that you were always hidden at home devoured with the hyp; but I told him, "Sir, let her alone, she will not do amiss, or any

thing

* When Madame de Sevigne was at Marseilles in 1672, she considered the numerous officers of the gallies, almost all knights of Malta, who came to see M. de Grignan, as one of the chief ornaments of that city.

thing that is ridiculous :" and really the manner in which you live is quite noble and perfectly sensible, considering the situation you are in. How do all the miseries agree with you? for they must inflict some corporeal pain. I persevere in the resolution of going into Britanny, notwithstanding my heart strongly inclines me to visit you ; but I am not worthy of being your mother, you would have been a true Roman matron with the love you bear your country. Adieu, thou dearest and most amiable woman. I should write till to-morrow, my thoughts, my pen, my ink, all fly together ; but my letter must go to the post, and I must not overwhelm you.

The K. of E. has dined here with M. de Lausun ; he, after dinner, visited *Mademoiselle*. It is said he is going over to Ireland, and that he has given the order of the Garter to M. de Lausun. I shall answer for nothing this year, but that I love you most dearly.

LETTER DCLX.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday February 28, 1689.

THE Chevalier went yesterday to Versailles to know his fate ; for not finding himself in the lists that have appeared, he wants to know whether he is intended to serve in the Dauphin's army, which has not yet been mentioned. As he has said he was capable of serving, he has a right to think he has not been forgotten ; at all events it is not his fault, for he is one of the best. It is certain that the K. of E. has set out this morning for Ireland, where he is expected with impatience ; he will be better there than here. He will traverse Britanny as swift as lightning ; and go straight to Brest, where he will meet with marshal d'Estrees, and ships and frigates all ready ; he carries 50,000 crowns. The King has given him sufficient arms for 10,000 men. As his B. Majesty took his leave, he concluded by saying with a smile, " That arms for himself were the only things that had been forgot :" the King gave him his own : the heroes of romance never did any thing more gallant. What will not this brave, but unhappy King do, with those arms that

that have ever been victorious? Here is the casque and cuirass of Rhenold and Amadis, and all the knight-errants in famous story; I will not say of Hector, for he was unfortunate. There is not an offer that can be suggested that the King has not made him; generosity and magnanimity have been carried to their utmost extremities. M. d'Avaux * is going with him, he set out two days ago. You will ask why M. de Barillon † was not the person? The reason is, as M. d'Avaux is perfectly acquainted with the affairs of Holland, he is more useful, than he who is acquainted only with those of England. The Queen has shut herself up at Poissi with her son: she will be near the King, and the fountain-head of intelligence; she is overwhelmed with grief, and a nephritic complaint, that makes it apprehended she has got the stone; this Princess is really much to be pitied. You see, my dear child, it is the rage of chattering, that makes me write all this; the Chevalier and the Gazette will inform you better than me. Your son has lived with me, I never leave him, and he is satisfied; he is going to take leave of the Miss Castelnau's; but his heart has yet no attractions; his duty and equipage take up his time; he is charmed at the thoughts of going, and setting the example to others. There is no particular object yet in view, there is no place to be besieged, nor any battle to be fought; we are only to stand upon the defensive, but then so powerfully defensive as to make our enemies tremble: never did a King of France see 300,000 men on foot, such spectacles were confined to the Kings of Persia; every thing is new, every thing is miraculous.

I carried the Marquis yesterday to take his leave of Madame de la Fayette, and to sup with Madame de Coulanges. I sometimes take him to M. de Pomponne's, sometimes to Madame de Vins and the Marchioness d'Huxelles: to-morrow he will go to Madame

du

* John-Anthony de Mesmes, Count d'Avaux, nephew to Claudio de Mesmes, also Count d'Avaux, both celebrated for their superior talents in negociation, and for their uncommon qualities of the heart and mind.

† M. de Barillon had been Ambassador to England.

du Pui-du-fou's and Madame de Lavardin's ; and then he will wait for his uncle, and set out towards the end of the week ; but, my dear child, muster your courage upon this occasion ; it is only a journey, and can be called nothing else at present. Let us inquire a little about Paulina, this little amiable pretty granddaughter ; I should never have thought she was of an untoward disposition, I should have thought her all sweetness ; but do not curb her, she has sense, she loves you, and she loves herself ; she is willing to please, this is sufficient to correct one's self, and I assure you it is not in childhood that we are corrected, this requires a state of reason ; self-love, so fatal in many respects, is admirable in this regard ; endeavour therefore to reason with her, without passion, without scolding, without humiliating her, for these revolt, and I will be answerable for your making her a little prodigy. Consider this as an affair of honour and conscience : teach her to be a good housewife ; it is a great thing to have wit and taste as she has. Esther is not yet printed. I had a great mind to say a word or two about you to Madame de Maintenon, it was at my tongue's end ; she advanced some steps to speak to me ; but as the King, after what I told you had passed, retired to his apartment, she followed him ; I had only time to testify by gesture my thanks and acknowledgment ; it was then all a whirlwind. M. de Meaux inquired after your health. I said to the Prince as he passed quick along, *how I pity those who are not here !* he heard me, but every thing was in such a hurry, that it was impossible to range a thought. Racine is going to write another tragedy ; the King has taken a taste for theatrical productions, and nothing else will be seen : but the history of Esther is singular, neither Judith, Ruth, nor any other subject could possibly succeed so well.

Madame de Chaulnes is gone to Versailles ; perhaps, she is to assist her sister-in-law * to receive the Queen at Poissi. Nothing has yet transpired with respect to Britanny, we must wait till the commandant is appointed.

* Charlotte d'Ailli, sister to M. de Chaulnes, Prior of Poissi.

pointed †. You are very happy that no one comes to assist you in the execution of your office. M. de Grignan will give chase to those dæmons ‡, who issue from the mountains, and then return to their holes. Here are many in Languedoc ; M. de Broglie || and M. de Basville § are in pursuit of them ; they disappear like ghosts ; and you likewise see armies in the provinces that will not be of the least utility.

The K. of E. yesterday invested M. de Lausun with the order of the Garter ; a kind of oath was read, which constitutes the ceremony ; the King placed his collar on the other side of ours, and a St. George that he had from the late King his father, which is set with diamonds, and is worth at least 10,000 crowns. Whilst the K. of E. was at *Mademoiselle's*, M. de Lausun went to Madame de la Fayette's with this ornament ; Madame de la Fayette gazed at this blue ribbon, and as she knew he had not that of France, she did not any way comprehend this masquerade ; she was quite silent, and so was he. The K. of E. must, however, think himself obliged to him, as he treats him so well. The King told M. de Lausun that this order was no exclusion to his own : in this case, that they may not cross each other, he will put the order of France like others under his coat, and will let the St. George hang to his right side with a blue ribbon. This little man's stars are very extraordinary.

Eight o'clock at night.

I am just returned from M. de Pomponne's ; I have heard him reason upon the present state of affairs, he finds that all the high mountains begin to level. The Irish business goes on admirably, and so compleatly engages the P. of O. that there is nothing to fear upon our coasts. Even the Lords, who have elected the P. of O. against their will, have protested against the violence of the lower house, alledging that a King cannot be elected, until the kingdom be declared *vacant*

† The Duke de Chaulnes, or Marshal d'Estrees.

‡ The religionists, who made commotions at that time.

|| Commandant in Languedoc.

§ Intendant of Languedoc;

cant by judicial judgment. All this is very good, no vigorous measures are to be taken; if Spain were to declare, we should arm rather on the side of Navarre than of Flanders, as this would be a most certain means of gaining possession of the latter. In a word, it appears that we are so strong and powerful, that we have nothing to do but keep our places, and make a good appearance. Let this be your manner of reasoning, till at least you see something to the contrary, and let not your trouble begin so soon; it is a pity to throw away your grief in this manner. I wished you present at this conversation. I know no other news. The Chevalier will come to-morrow. The Abbe Bigorre has just informed me that the president Barantin dropt down dead this morning whilst he was seated in his place in the Great Council. Adieu, dear child, do not amuse yourself by answering me with a long letter. Consider how many harangues here are, to which you have nothing more to say than *Amen*. I have a thousand friendly compliments to pay you from M. de Lamoignon, Madame de Lavardin, and Madame de Mouci; every thing still shines with the remembrance of you.

LETTER DCLXI.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday March 2, 1689.

SHROVE Tuesday is not an indifferent day to Paulina; I cannot help scolding you, my dear child, for not having sent her in a pretty manner to the good Langlee's, to dance a little with Madame d'Oraison; what harm would there have been in allowing her this little pastime? I am assured that this little girl is very pretty, that she has a good air, and supports herself well, and even eclipses more regular beauties. I also scold you for reading all your letters when you go to bed; I know it is scarcely possible for you to keep them till the next day; but you must suppose that sleep's not necessary, for besides there being many things that may create disagreeable thoughts, if there were nothing but reflections and news, it would not be a whit better; before the imagination has separated these things,

things, the night elapses: so that as you know I tell the truth, settle these matters for the benefit of your health. I took my Marquis yesterday to Madame du Pui-du-fou's; she is grown very old. M. de Mirepoix, who had already been there to see me once, returned a second time, and each time all his conversation turned upon his condescension in marrying to please his family. The little puppet is dying of the spleen in this dreary house. I afterwards went to Madame de Lavardin's, to whom I remembered you; she embraced your son several times, and she loves you dearly, as well as Madame de Mouci; but this last is in the third heaven, she has lost a sister, who was a nun, for whom she had very little regard; I will pay your compliments to her and her wise brother. The Chevalier arrived last night, and he is very well; he will be employed, but he knows not yet in what country; I admire his courage. Your son is very agreeable and pretty, he already manages all his affairs, he gives orders, bargains, and calculates; it is a pity his father had not done the same. The Chevalier will inform you what the King said to the K. of E. at his taking his leave; "Sir, it is with grief I see you go; yet I never desire to see you again; but if you return, you may be persuaded, that you will find me the same that you left me." Could any thing better have been said? The King has loaded him with every thing both great and little; two millions of money, ships, frigates, troops, officers, and M. d'Avaux, who makes, upon the occasion, one of the most brilliant figures in the world; and I will venture to say, that there is not any one who would not be proud of the employment, or think it unworthy of a man, thoroughly acquainted with business, and capable of giving good advice; if M. de Barillon is not sensible of this, he is very happy. I now come to the minutiae, such as toilets, camp-beds, services of plate plain and gilt, arms for his person, which are the King's; arms for the troops in Ireland, and those who go with him, who are very numerous; in a word, generosity, magnificence, and magnanimity, were never so strikingly displayed as upon this occasion. The King is not willing that the

Queen

Queen should go to Poissi, as she will have very little company there; but the King will take care of her, and she will receive news without intermission. The parting of the K. and Q. of E. rent the hearts of all the spectators; nothing but tears, sighs, lamentations, and swoonings were to be seen or heard, which is very easy to be comprehended. Such is his destiny, he has a good cause, he is the protector of the true religion, and his courage will allow him no other alternative than conquest or death.

Did I inform you that the president Barantin died upon his seat in the Great Council two days ago? He dropt down dead suddenly; will his wife, who is incessantly laughing, be still in a risible mood upon this occasion? The good man la Troche is dead, write to his wife. Madame de Nesle * is brought to bed of a son; I know not whether that *woodcock* † is pleased with it, for she has now no fondness for any but the Count de Mailli, who is gone to accompany the K. of E. to Brest; such a post would have done honour to a Duke or a Prince. M. de Duras has been received as a Duke in parliament, and is going to command the finest army that ever was in France.

I am just returned from Madame de la Fayette's, where I found M. Courtin, M. de la Trousse, and the Duke d'Estrees: the conversation was very political. M. d'Avaux is ambassador extraordinary to the K. of E. he has the care of the troops and the finances; in a word, he is the soul of the undertaking, and the man of confidence. I dined with your son at Madame de Chaulnes, who desires to be remembered to you in the kindest manner; we shall not set out till after Easter. My dear girl, nothing attracts me to Britanny, but solely my business; neither my son, nor his wife, is now at the Rocks, they have an attachment to Rennes, where their mother is. My son will, perhaps, be with these noblemen. The retirement and solitude

* Mary de Coligny, mother to Lewis de Mailli, Marquis de Nesle, born posthumous.

† Jane de Monchi-Montcavrel, grandmother to the Marquis de Nesle, and mother to Lewis, Count de Mailli.

Solitude of the Rocks is no longer agreeable to them ; they will remain there through complaisance, and I shall give them all their liberty in the month of October. I have not the least doubt that you will come this winter to Paris with M. de Grignan ; there is nothing more I wish for, than to be with you, let it be where it will. I think Rochefoucault is right, when he says, *pain is equally divided throughout every condition of life* : some kinds of it are, however, very heavy. Dear child, adieu, you make me laugh, when you say you have no longer any wit, you imagine you have no farther occasion for it ; but rap ever so softly at that door, and you will find somebody to answer. Do not find fault with your letters, they abound with spirit and sentiment. I embrace you a thousand times.

LETTER DCLXII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday March 4, 1689.

THE Chevalier and I have been uneasy, since we are acquainted with the hour you receive our letters ; it is by knowing that if you read them before you go to rest, we affectionately prevent you from sleeping, just three times a week. Tell us the truth, and if you do not, we shall be of no other opinion : it is impossible, after having read our volumes, supposing they even contained nothing mournful or disagreeable, to avoid thinking and meditating upon the news we send you ; less than this is sufficient to deprive a person of sleep, who is so little addicted to it as you are ; if this be aided by the quick circulation of your blood, and the subtile air of Provence, you will find the people you love the most in the world make you ill, and assassinate you regularly every post-day. This opinion, my dear child, is but too well grounded, to avoid making me uneasy, or admire how much we may conduce to the doing of harm, through friendship to those who are the dearest to us. This is an evil without a remedy, and which must be left to God, like all the rest.

M. de Lausun has, it is said, refused to go to Ireland with the K. of E. but he has, nevertheless, given

to

to understand, that he would go, on condition of being created a Duke. It is certain that their Majesties of St. Germains made mention of it; I know not whether this kind of convention may not be detrimental to M. de Lausun.

Your dear child is again to-day giving orders about all his business. He is very gay, and will set out to-morrow with the finest weather in the world: though it be nothing more than a journey, I cannot help feeling a dejection of spirits. I saw Jarze yesterday, he is gay notwithstanding his misfortune *; he talked with me near two hours, and related to me all his melancholy adventure. The King asked him the whole particulars, from beginning to end; it is a very piteous story; he has suffered a great deal, and is still in pain from the loss of his hand.

We have just received your letters of the 25th; you are very much tired with these shocking sermons; you have indeed great reason, it is making a sacrifice to hear them: in this respect, indeed, your grandeur is somewhat inconvenient; must you appear every day in pomp? This is cruel, and I will lay your complaints before father Gaillard. I sometimes go to hear the sermons at St. Gervais, with Madame de Coulanges, who never loses one; father Soanen § preaches there very well. Father Gaillard † shines at St. Germain de l'Auxerrois; but where do they get the preachers that hold forth in your country? you cannot hesitate with regard to your returning to St. Martin's; for instead of going back to Lambesc and Aix, you must support your *bill of review*, you alone can undertake it; endeavour to take every necessary step to that end; to tell you how to act, is what I cannot do; but as you have a long time subsisted by impossibilities, you must again pursue this miraculous track; you see very plainly that you must not leave your work imperfect. I shall go then with pleasing hopes of seeing

* The Marquis de Jarze had his hand taken off by a cannon-shot at the siege of Philippsbourg.

§ John Soanen, a celebrated preacher of the Oratoire, afterwards Bishop of Senez.

† A celebrated Jesuit preacher.

seeing you in winter ; this is an agreeable perspective, which will afford me some consolation during a journey that I certainly do not take for pleasure.

You want then to persuade me, you have no longer any wit, and that you are now incapable of writing ; but your letters are no conviction of this, you must give me some other proofs, as Bussi said. I embrace my dear daughter, and her daughter ; this is going a great way ; but do not bring old age and illness upon you ; you know I shall be affected. The Chevalier sends you Esther, let us know your opinion of it.

We have been struck senseless with the horrid story of this culprit, what a shocking death ! this man may be said to be summoned ; and we may say with St. Augustine, *If he had been from among us, he would have remained with us.* He should nevertheless, I think, have been allowed some days to repent ; for it is a dreadful thing to be strangled in the midst of blasphemies.

LETTER DCLXIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday March 7, 1689.

IF you had seen your dear son set out on Saturday, you would have wept as well as us, it was impossible to prevent it ; nevertheless, as there is no talk yet of any hostile motions, we should have considered it as only a journey. The Marquis was pretty and gay, and he laughed at us, being quite taken up with his equipage, which is in very good condition. M. du Plessis is gone with him, and he will take particular care of the Marquis, till such time as he has delivered him into the hands of his uncle's officers : all the young folks follow the good example set by your son ; I advise you to take courage like the rest, and believe that God will preserve him for you ; you stand in need of resolution to complete the business, relative to M. d'Aiguebonne ; this thorn that galls your son must be removed. You may still see in part those things which you regretted being absent from. Racine is upon a new piece for next winter, it is either Jephtha

or Absalon §. You will go to St. Cyr, and see M. de Grignan received a knight; you will find at least the Q. of E. who will afford you some consolation for not seeing her husband; and, please God, we will meet again, after having each made our tour. I imagine you will be sensible of our separation; I shall be very sensible of it on my side, I assure you. I consider Britanny as a long stretch, a perfect voyage, whither my business compels me to go. We shall not set out till after Easter. If you meet with any thing that will do for your son, we shall not fail to set a value upon our goods; in a word, we shall have what Providence has in store for us.

LETTER DCLXIV.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday March 9, 1689.

MADAME d'Alerac is gone for a few days to the Feuillantines; there is frequently a coolness between her and Madame d'Usez *; I nevertheless believe she will return with this Duchess to Versailles; the poor girl is not happy, her stars are not so propitious as those of Madame de Coissin †; who seems at present perfectly well disposed towards M. d'Enticement; the marriage articles were signed on Monday, provisionally, that unless one article were altered, the marriage should be void. It was thought prudent not to return without signing them, lest the world should be merry at their expence. This medium was taken, which is a very pleasant step on the day a family is convened, and when usually every thing is the soul of harmony. M. de Coissin is extremely happy at expedients in times of exigence. A courier was, however, dispatched to Rome upon this occasion.

M. de Grignan's letter has made me tremble, I, who can neither bear the sight, nor the thought of a precipice;

§ This was neither the one or other; it was Athalia, Racine's last production and master-piece.

* Julia-Maria de Sainte-Maure, Duchess d'Usez, cousin-german to Madame d'Alerac.

† Magdelan-Armande du Cambout, daughter to Armand du Cambout, Duke de Coissin.

cipice ; how horrible to pass over one, and be continually within a hair's breadth of a shocking death ! I do not comprehend how M. de Grignan can go into a country, where the very bears cannot exist. Truly the Misses de la Charses are very agreeably situated, this is a pretty castle. What grieves me is, that I fear these *dæmons*, which disappear when they are frightened and see M. de Grignan, will re-appear with the same facility, as soon as he is gone ; in this case all would be to do over again. Indeed, my dear child, the King is well served ; neither life nor fortune is considered when his pleasure is in question ; if we were as well disposed towards God, we should be great saints.

The Chevalier and I have been laughing at the difficulty we had, to conceive that at Marseilles you returned home to say your prayers, asking each other, *what does she mean ?* Do you understand this ? No ; nor I neither ; as if you had been in a delirium, or had said one thing for another ; in a word, I never had such a strange incomprehensibility ; I that know you are always disposed to devotion upon the Lord's day, was so confused by Marseilles and the opera, by the throng that surrounded you, that I never once thought of your regularity. Indeed, my dear child, I think we should ask you pardon for this injustice. I pity you for being compelled to hear bad sermons, this is a real misery. Very good ones are preached here by father Soanen at St. Gervais's, and the Abbe Anselme at St. Paul's, but I do not hear them every day ; this constraint is imposed upon you by the place you are in. I acknowledge that if it forced me to commune, for no other reason than external parade, I should not easily be prevailed upon to do it ; and I would sooner avoid edifying fools and ignorant people, than to stake so much upon so important an occasion ; for I am assured that every first Sunday of the month, all the twelve or thirteen feasts of the Virgin, this ceremony must be performed. My God ! tell them that St. Lewis, who was more holy than you are, went to the communion only five times a year. But do the Provincials know their religion ? They are all pilgrims, penitents, in *ex voto*, disguised in different colours.

What

What does your *foolship* think of the K. of E? will not Ireland give him a little room to play? M. du Bois knows more than any man about our holy religion, disfigured as it is; he is as much displeased as I am at the hangman, who made the execution a private battle between him and the malefactor; care should have been taken not to let him suffer whilst he was blaspheming, this was too visible and too scandalous a damnation; he should, says M. du Bois, have been remanded back to prison, when opium should have been administered to appease him, and time allowed him to speak; this would have been acting conscientiously; but it is over.

You speak to me of Paulina, as if she had a vocation; you think it of the same value as your own, according to the estimation of the late M. d'Agen; this may be the case, but do not forget to tell me what he says to you of it, and in what place she fancies she should choose to be; the Coadjutor will be a very proper person to examine her. It is true I feel some partiality for her; is this because she has some kind of connection with you, by the most imperfect part? It must be the operation of my stars that leads me to it; but besides its very seldom happening that one has the same fondness for two persons, I am very much afraid that if Paulina is humoursome, she does not, like you, entertain a solid and tender friendship, which effaces every thing but what is good and exquisite. In a word, my dear, we shall judge one of these days, if it pleases God; in the mean while tell me how she is; I thought she was gentleness itself, with that disposition to please, that makes us please.

The news about M. de Beauvillier, M. de Chevreuse, and M. de Lausun, is one of the falsities of this year, it was circulated for two days here, and probability induced people to credit it; I told it to Madame de Coulanges and the Duchess de Lude; I had it from the Abbe Bigorre; but M. de Lamoignon would not believe it, and it was without foundation; it does not surprise us that it was propagated, and believed in Provence. You have got Esther, its publication has produced the usual effect; you know that M. de Feuillade

lade says it is a bill of review against the public's approbation, you shall be the judge. As to me, I answer only for the beauty of the representation, which cannot be called in question.

The Duchess of Duras * went, the day after her nuptials, which was yesterday, to take the tabouret. Her husband is going to join his regiment, and his father is at the head of the finest army France ever had, crowned with honours; his mother is at Besancon, with a poignard in her breast; and the young Duchess with her mother at the old hotel of Bouillon. Madame du Noailles wanted to go into Roussillon with her husband and the Countess de Guiche: they are both big with child; but they are stopt till after they are brought to bed. The Duchess of Gramont is going to Bearn. I have acquainted you with the agreeableness of M. d'Avaux's employment, nothing can be more brilliant. I am, my dear child, entirely your's; I acquit myself perfectly with regard to you, of the precept of loving my neighbour like myself.

LETTER DCLXV.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday March 11, 1689.

THE Duke de Chaulnes did to perfection the honours of his government to the K. of E. he had ordered two suppers to be prepared on the road, the one at ten o'clock, the other at midnight; the King pushed on as fast as possible to la Roche-Bernard; he very kindly embraced M. de Chaulnes, having known him formerly. M. de Chaulnes wanted to conduct him to a chamber to repose himself; the King said he wanted nothing but some victuals; he entered into a saloon where the fairies had served up a supper, all hot, consisting of the finest sea and river fish, and every thing alike, that is to say perfectly agreeable, as well as the company, composed of a great number of the nobility of both sexes. M. de Chaulnes presented him the napkin, and would have waited upon him at table; but the King would not suffer it, and

* Louisa-Magdalen de la Marck,

made him sup with him, as well as several persons of quality. This King eat as if there were no such man as the Prince of Orange in the world. He set out the next day, and embarked at Brest the sixth or seventh of this month. What a devilish man this Prince of Orange is, who alone sets all Europe in motion! what a meteor! M. de la Feuillade expatiated the other day upon the extensive genius of this Prince; M. de Chandenier said he would rather choose to be the K. of E. M. de la Feuillade abruptly replied, "This is the sentiment of a man, who had rather be like M. de Chandenier *, than M. de Noailles." This occasioned a laugh.

I transmit you M. de Grignan's letter, I am frightened to have it in my pocket; is it possible he can have gone through the dangers he speaks of? It is a great pity he had not *the superb order*, as it went to Monaco. Give my compliments to him upon his hair-breadth escape from the abyss. How do I stand with the Coadjutor? Our housekeeping went on pretty well at Paris: tell him what you please, my dear child, according to the footing you are upon with him; for I will have no understanding with your enemies.

LETTER DCLXVI.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday March 14, 1689.

IT is now, my dear child, four o'clock, I had my collation at eleven, and I shall sup to-night. I have been to solicit the Great Council, where M. Gui § has been pleased to make us recapitulate all the invincible arguments in your suit. I had with me the but too amiable Rochon ‡, who shews from two little memorials drawn up after his manner, that there is no kind of contradiction in his arrêts; he has perfectly well

* Francis de Rochecourt, Marquis de Chandenier, had been first captain of the King's body-guard; but falling into disgrace, he was dismissed, and the Duke de Noailles succeeded him in 1651.

§ Agent to Madame d'Aiguebonne, with whom M. de Grignan was at law.

† Solicitor for M. de Grignan.

well instructed my good M. Bailli, who is to return to-morrow for the love of us, in that same tribunal where he formerly made the justice of my cause so greatly triumph, and he will not do less for you; for it calls for vengeance. The Chevalier is on his side with Vaille, he repeats the fatigues of the war, which I am sure he has very well got over, and only smiles at them. It is indeed all a laughing matter; for, if justice be heard, the bill will be treated as a foolish, daring, groundless attempt: if the bill is received, we will throw out our *state letters*, and you must come this winter to obtain the victory. But M. Gui chases two hares at a time; the day he presented a petition to the Great Council, he presented another to the fourth court of inquests; this excites passion and indignation. All your great friends perform their duty perfectly well, and the Chevalier beyond every thing that can be said.

My dear Count, I am rejoiced at your return, you have been in the goats country; for none but those pretty folks can climb those rocks; the thought alone hurts me. I beg that those *dæmons*, who appear and disappear in a moment, may not often give you such uneasiness. You will not have so much trouble to defend yourself here against the fury of M. Gui, who has no other basis than such ignorance as is worthy of Madame de B—, with whom I had a *tete à tête* the other day, and who talks as much nonsense as ever; I ask the Coadjutor's pardon for speaking so of his old friend; but she is so unworthy of that appellation, that I shall no longer think that any constraint upon me. This deceitful woman is not worth being uneasy about; which ever way she turns herself, she has always mischief in view. I embrace you, my dear Count.

Now, daughter, I come to you; I am delighted to think you said *Amen* to all the trifles I related. You have followed my advice; I am always better pleased with the confidence you repose in me in writing less, than the pleasure of reading your long letters, which is always spoiled by reflecting upon the injury they do you. I find Madame de Chaulnes will set out

after Easter, and I very commodiously with her. Be not uneasy upon my account, but for the longer absence, and the interruption of our correspondence for a few days.

I informed you that the Q. of E. was going to Poissi, it was her design, but the King opposed it. I wanted to fly after my letter; for I am always sorry to write you falsities. The news of M. de Beauvillier, M. de Chevreuse, and M. de Lausun, was insolently propagated throughout Paris. M. de la Trousse set out this morning to go and take the command in Poitou and in the county of Aunis, under the orders, however, of the marshal de Lorges. I believe that the Chevalier will be in a *French army*; such are those called that are not upon the Rhine.

LETTER DCLXVII.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday March 16, 1689.

WE have this morning gained the finest victory that could be wished for, in the present state of your affairs with M. de Aiguebonne; it is in your name, my dear girl, that we have fought and beaten your enemies. M. Gui had started two hares, the one in a petition to the Great Council, upon the contradiction of arrets, the other in a bill of review against your last arret to the fourth court of inquests. We were informed of this from the Great Council; without this, the judges would have put upon it, *the parties to appear*, and war would have been declared. Writing and pleading now take place, and antideluvian matters are recurred to; it is re-examined, *incidents* occur, and this single word, which seems only to imply information and instruction, does all the mischief in the world to people no longer willing to plead, and to think their business at an end: you are indebted for this first advice to one of your friends. The council who was summing up the evidence, and is a man of sense, was interrupted; he was informed that the matter did not stand as he asserted, and that there was no contradiction in it; he was told, that he must have been better informed: here the Chevalier Rochon and I stuck;

I stuck ; we demonstrated, even by your adversaries papers, that like the Jews, they stood self-condemned. Rochon spoke divinely ; solicitations now took place at the presidents and counsellors ; in three days twenty-two judges are convened ; noise, complaints, and outcries against so long a persecution, are only a prelude to unanimously re-examining the arrêt obtained in your favour six months ago : every one recollects, and all is alive ; such shocking chicanery excites indignation, our friends take the field with sincerity and warmth, and such an earnest desire to extricate you from this oppression, that they seem to consider it as their own business : they are for throwing out the petition, putting it into the hands of the register, which is to be considered as a decisive arrêt, and then the bill of review must fall of itself. After such a decision no counsel was called, all chicanery was at an end, and all the world agree that it was one of the finest victories that could be obtained under your standard, and in your favour. We had a most sensible pleasure this morning ; we were all present when the judges entered the court, having the greatest reason to expect we should confound our enemies ; in effect, M. Bailli came out like the dove an hour afterwards, and told me very seriously, *Madame, you have obtained what you wished for.* I did not play cunning with the Chevalier, Vaille, or Rochon ; our hearts were cheered, and my joy would display itself ; the Chevalier scolded me, he said he would bring me out no more with him, if I could not be quiet ; this was his menace ; I would speak a little loud, with an air of triumph, and he told me those who could not dissemble, did not know how to reign. Another counsellor came out, who told M. d'Aiguebonne he had lost his suit ; I saw him slip away softly without saying a word ; he is accustomed to this kind of success. I recollect having formerly seen Madame d'Ourouer*, mother to M. de Richelieu, fly before me in the same

* Maria Frances de Guemauve, widow to Francis de Vigneret, Marquis of Pont-Courlai, afterwards married to Charles de Grossouvre, Count d'Ourouer, who was assassinated in his coach in 1658.

tribunal, where I called M. Bailli once more to bring me good fortune. M. Gui remained to console himself with emptying his snuff-box. Another counsellor told us, we had got our cause with one voice ; *with one voice* was a circumstance that gave us great pleasure. M. Gui had prudently said to M. Rousseau, that the arrêt which you had obtained six months ago, had not been digested, that it had been drawn up by children. Rousseau replied to him very pleasantly this morning ; "Here, Sir, are twenty-two more children, who have just condemned you with one voice." I could not refrain from laughing at this, but the Chevalier's great soul could not attend to such trifles. We thanked all our judges when they came out, each of us varying our compliments twenty different ways. In a word, we returned very chearfully to dinner ; the truth must be owned, the whole republic were convened to receive us ; we each of us write to you our different parts ; the Chevalier has allotted me the recital of the victory, and at five o'clock we shall go together to thank our presidents, the dean, and some others, who signalized themselves. If you would have me, my dear child, talk to you seriously of the Chevalier de Grignan, I must tell you, in good faith, you are infinitely obliged to him ; nothing could equal his assiduity, his vigilance, his foresight ; the strength and power of his solicitations ; the warmth with which he inspired his friends to engage in our interest ; the regard that is paid to his person ; the trouble he takes, for which God rewards him with a good state of health. In a word, we find ourselves so well, and so happy to do you some service, that we propose writing a book with this title, *The Light and Salutary Affiduities of Friendship* ; we shall print it without being afraid of ruining the bookseller by the smallness of the sale ; so sure it is, that few people are persuaded of this truth. You cannot therefore be too thankful to the Chevalier, or love him too much. I know not how to talk to you of any thing else at present but this evangelist of the day.

The

The grief which so completely overwhelmed the Chevalier and me last night, at the situation of the Archbishop (of Arles) was in some degree alleviated by the letters we received this morning from Arles, bringing no confirmation of it; and as they make no mention of his death, we were in hopes that his weakness would not yet be attended by the consequences which we apprehended, and that a loss so sensible as that of this great and illustrious prelate, might be retarded at least for some months. You say very right, my dear child, this was the only critical time to ask what was improper to be asked, but there are some people who never acknowledge themselves in the wrong; God bless them!

Madame de Vins has given us good advice, and paid her compliments to us this morning, almost upon the field of battle. Madame de Lavardin, Madame de la Fayette, and Madame de Coulanges, have sent to desire me to pay you their compliments. Adieu, my dear child, I am too happy in having interested myself for you, this joy goes directly to my heart. Count, you are not without your share of it; I embrace you both with all my heart.

What says M. Gaillard * about this victory? methinks I see his eyes and his mien. His brother does wonders at St. Germain de l'Auxerrois §.

LETTER DCLXVIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday March 18, 1689.

YOU are in the right, my dear child, to think I should be afflicted at the loss of the Archbishop †. You cannot figure to yourself how much true merit, rare virtues, good sense, and the upright

* Madame de Sevigne entertained a very high opinion of M. Gaillard's merit and sense. He was an advocate of the parliament of Aix. She said, when she spoke of him, that no physiognomy had made so great an impression on her as his.

§ Father Gaillard, a Jesuit, preached there during Lent with great success.

† Francis-Adhemar de Monteil, Archbishop of Arles, and uncle to M. de Grignan, died March 9, 1689.

heart of this great prelate make me regret his loss. I dare not think of his goodness towards his family, and his tenderneſs for all in general, and for you and your ſon in particular; not that I conceive there is any great vacancy in your house, which will never, never be filled, I am not afraid to ſay it; there are no minds and hearts formed in the ſame moulds; ſuch ſorts of metal have been transmuted by the corruption of the times, and there is no more left of the ſame ore. You have comprehended my ſentiments, and done me much honour, which I return in ſending your own. We must have a little of that good alloy which we regret the loss of, to be ſensible of that loss in the manner we feel it: this elogium muſt be ſubſcribed to, for I am perſuaded we are more or leſs affected with those great qualities, in proportion as we are more or leſs acquainted with them.

My dear Count, in this place I preſent you with my compliments; you were tenderly beloved by that dear uncle: he loved his name and family; he was in the right, it was well worth his attention. I pity you for not being able any longer to honour ſuch merit, and ſo many reſpectable qualities: here is the firſt race gone, and we muſt follow, my dear Count. In the mean while, with tears I embracē you, as if I had the honour of bearing your name.

This melancholy event damps the joy of our little victory. The Chevalier is very willing to puſh the bill of review, whiſt the matter is in hand; but I know not whether he will have time; it ſhould not be left half done: however, he cannot do amiss. There is no more talk of an arret of council, the annulling of the arret, or any opposition; ſo that we may ſleep in quiet till winter. I am charmed to think that our letters, which you receive at night, do not interrupt your reſpoſe three times a week: I believe you, my dear child, and I will drive away this little dragon that tormented me. Madame de Chaulnes is charmed at taking me with her; I have a thouſand things to do at Buron, that is to ſay, at Nantes: I muſt abſolutely take this journey, I cannot employ my time better; after that, we ſhall know what it will please God to do with me, and

and when he will choose to restore me to you. I believe we shall set out exactly at Easter. Father Gaillard preached this morning perfectly well upon the Samaritan, he is the Bourdaloue of this year.

LETTER DCLXIX.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday March 21, 1689.

I CAN assure you, daughter, that the Bishop of Beauvais, who was here the other day, appeared to the Chevalier and me a true relation and friend of the Grignans, regretting and praising the late Archbi-
shop, and at length compelling the Chevalier to tell him sincerely, that since the Coadjutor had not the ribbon, he was charmed to think he had it. Father de la Chaise has just told the Bishop of Beauvais, that his Majesty had given him the ribbon of the late M. d'Arles, and that he should wear it at Whitsuntide. You find that this ribbon was well designed.

I am very well pleased, my dear girl, not to go alone upon the Loire, *in the current of water and a little boat*; and the more so, as that of a valet de chambre favourite to the K. of E. who was carrying to Nantes all the toilets, services of plate, night-gowns, and a thousand other conveniences which the King had given to this K. of E. perished near the bridge of Ce, and this poor man has been drowned; this would have ter-
rified you. I am going, then, in safety, perhaps, be-
fore Easter, Madame de Chaulnes having taken it into
her head to pass the holidays at Malicorne. I will en-
deavour to stay till Easter-week, but I cannot be cer-
tain. She intends to write to you to-day, to tell you
what care she will take of me. Rejoice with M. de
Chaulnes that no governor is treated like him; lieute-
nant-general Revel is under his orders; and even the
troops that are in the neighbourhood of Brest receive
their orders from this governor to obey marshal d'Estrees,
when there will be occasion, M. de Louvois has been
delighted with his good conduct, vigilance, and ex-
actness; this man says every thing he can in his favour,
and M. de Chaulnes will be very well pleased with your
knowing it, and your writing to him,

M. de Barillon is rich, fat, and old, as he says, and views, without envy, M. d'Avaux's brilliant station. He loves to be surrounded with his friends and family in peace and tranquillity, which satisfies him. You say wonders of Esther; it is very true that the misfortunes of Sion should be sung by innocent persons; Champsmele would have given you the heart-ach. It is this propriety that charmed in this piece. Racine will scarce ever do any thing again so agreeable, for there is no history like this; it was an accident and an assortment of every thing, which are, perhaps, never to be met with again; for Judith, Boaz, Ruth, and the others which I do not recollect, can never produce so fine an effect. Racine has, nevertheless, a great share of sense, it is to be hoped.

The Marquis de Castres has greatly distinguished himself upon an occasion similar to that in which the Chevalier de Sourdis was beaten. Madame de Castries * has received compliments thereupon, the King having said to Cardinal de Bonzi, "Without your nephew's fortitude, the infantry would have been lost; he performed wonders." You may imagine how pleasing these elogiums are. Adieu, my belle, I told M. de Pomponne that you were jealous of the immortal life of M. d'Angers †; he gave me an account of the vivacity of this prelate, who, excepting his sight, enjoys a very good state of health at ninety-two and upwards. One Abbe de la Mothe, an Arch-deacon, the person who condemned the orations of M. la Tourneux, and said the church always viewed translations with horror, died after two days illness, when he boasted he was in perfect health. Your son has applied himself to his duty and his calling; he is just as you would wish him to be, and he is moreover well principled in religion, for which you should thank God. It is a great happiness to be endowed with Christian sentiments.

LET-

* Elizabeth de Bonzi, mother to Joseph Francis de la Croix, Marquis of Castres, and sister to Cardinal de Bonzi, Archbishop of Narbonne.

† Henry Arnaud, Bishop of Angers, uncle to M. de Pomponne.

LETTER DCLXX.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday March 23, 1689.

I SHALL not recal those praises which I bestowed upon the tragedy of Esther ; I shall ever be delighted with the harmony and novelty of this representation ; I was quite ravished at it ; I found a thousand just observations, so well placed, and so important to a King, that I entered with uncommon spirit into the pleasure arising from the combination of poetry and singing with the most solid truths ; I was affected with these various beauties ; so that I am very far from altering my opinion ; but I told you that the impression of this piece produced its usual effect, and has brought forth a bill of review against excessive applause. As to me, who have again read it with pleasure, I imagine that the critics are routed, and that M. d'Aiguebonne's bill of review will be damned, if the Chevalier has time to push it. The victory of the Great Council has been both brilliant and agreeable, and I doubt not but it will give you satisfaction ; I am impatient to hear from you upon that head. M. de Lamoignon told me again to-day, that this advantage gained, sword in hand, was more considerable than was imagined ; I told him he was mistaken, as we had been sensible of this pleasure in its greatest latitude. He is deeply concerned in the great cause between *Madaemoiselle*, the Prince, and the whole house of Lorraine, who solicit in the same manner as we might ; M. de Lamoignon is to plead on Thursday, and the affair will be determined upon hearing.

Your son's letter will give you pleasure, as it appears to come from a contented man, and one who is pleased with his trade. The King is so well satisfied with M. de Castris, that he has made him simple brigadier ; this is the right method of proceeding, recompences timely administered receive an additional value, they excite and encourage emulation. His Majesty told Cardinal de Bonzi *, that having no share in this favour, he ought not to thank him for it.

[The

* Uncle to the Marquis de Castris.

The K. of E. set sail on the seventeenth, and arrived in Ireland on the 19th. Little Mailli, who accompanied him to Brest, is returned. Adieu, my charming girl, I dread being too distant from you, it grieves me, and I swallow this voyage like a dose of physic ; what afflicts me is, I have no time to lose ; in truth, I have some very melancholy reflections ; and though I submit to Providence which separates us, what would become of me if I did not live in hopes of seeing you again ?

LETTER DCLXXI.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday March 25, (the day of the Annunciation) 1689.

THOUGH your letters are not come to hand, we nevertheless write to you again. It is very probable that you have set a good example to-day ; this is a high festival, and is the foundation of Easter ; in a word, the festival of Christianity, and the day of the incarnation of our Lord : the Virgin Mary acts a great part in it, but she is not the first performer. In a word, M. Nicole, M. le Tourneux, and all our preachers, have said what they know upon the occasion.

Your child has wrote me a most friendly letter ; he has greatly lamented the loss of his uncle the Archbishop. It is thought that his successor* will soon be here : he may if he will amuse himself with the bill of review ; as for us, we have carried the judgment of the Great Council sword in hand. I am still disputing with Madame de Chaulnes ; I am for postponing our departure till after Easter. My dear child, how mortified I am at leaving you again ; I am sensible of this separation ; *reason says Britanny, and friendship Paris.* We must sometimes submit to this severity, you know better how to do it than any one, I must then imitate you.

Mind what I am going to say. Do you know M. de B. the extravagant shepherd of Fontainbleau, otherwise *mad-cap* ? do you know how he is made ? tall, thin, with

* John-Baptist Adhemar de Monteil, Coadjutor of Arles, brother to M. de Grignan.

with a mad look, and emaciated; in a word, such as he is, he lodged at the hotel de Lione with the Duke and Duchess d'Estrees, Madame de V. and Mademoiselle de V. This last went about two months ago to St. Mary's in the Fauxbourg St. Germain; it was imagined that the happiness of her sister conduced to make this a nun. Do you know what this mad-cap did at the hotel de Lione? excite tenderness in Miss V. notwithstanding his figure. Benserade would hereupon say, as he did of Madame de —, who loved her husband; *so much the better if she loves, she will also love another.* This little girl of seventeen is then really enamoured with this Don Quixote; and he went yesterday with five or six of M. de Gevre's guards, and broke open the grate of the convent with a bludgeon: he entered the convent with one of his men, found Mademoiselle V. who was waiting for him, put her into a coach, and carried her to M. de Gevres, performed the marriage-ceremony by leaping over a broom-stick, lay together, and are this morning set out nobody knows whither. We may indeed, upon this occasion say, *Agnes and the dead corse are gone forth.* The Duke d'Estrees cries out and complains that B. has violated the laws of hospitality. Madame de V. is for having him beheaded. M. de Gevres says he did not know it was Mademoiselle de V. All the B's. are willing to stop the prosecution of their kinsman. I know not yet what has been said at Versailles upon this head. This, my dear, you know must be the scripture of the day. What think you of love? I despise it when it stoops to such infamous fellows.

LETTER DCLXXII.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday March 28, 1689.

WE do not set out till after Easter, which I am very glad of; Madame de Chaulnes has had her audience of leave, when the King said a thousand agreeable things in favour of M. de Chaulnes. We wait for your letters of to-morrow with real impatience, as we want to see how you received the news of our little victory, which de Lamoignon is willing to call

call a great one. For this fortnight past we have been landed upon the shore, viewing you agitated with the same thoughts and fears as we were. We shall be delighted to see you safe landed as we are, and all equally secure from the storm. You are in the right to say I was not so well pleased to gain my cause for 40,000 crowns ; I did not feel it in comparison of this ; I was young, and I know not what I thought of at that time ; I was then estranged to all my affairs, you are much nearer to me, and your interest much dearer.

M. de Lamoignon has been concerned on all sides in the affair of mad-cap and Miss V. he is related to the latter, and M. de Gevres, after having assisted in this shocking action, ran to Versailles, and told the King that being M. de B's friend, he could not avoid serving him ; the King reprimanded him, and told him he had not given him the government of Paris for such a use ; M. de Gevres asked pardon, and the King was somewhat pacified. As to M. de B. he may go where he pleases ; but if he should be taken, and tried, no man alive could save him ; all the family of the B's will endeavour to prevent his appearing. M. de Lamoignon has brought the girl back to her mother, who was ready to burst when she saw her ; the girl says she is not married, she nevertheless passed two nights with this infamous mad-cap. It is said she has been married for these four months, and that she has informed the King of it in writing. Nothing can be more extravagant than the whole affair. The Duke d'Estrees is quite enraged that a man whom he generously allowed to lodge with him, should thus wound and trample upon hospitality. The Duke de Charot and him had some words on Lady-day ; the Duke d'Estrees carried his reproaches and threats to a great length, without mincing words ; the Duke de Charot was piqued, and said to him, " Sir, if I had not been at the communion, I should have a few words to say to you." The Duke d'Estrees was immediately in the clouds, and nothing could be more pleasant than for all this to pass, whilst at the same time they thought they were saying nothing ; think of the Duke de Charot's style—would this had not been the day of communion ?

We

We supped last night with the Abbe Pelletier, M. and Madame de Lamoignon, M. and Madame de Coulanges, M. Courtin, the Abbe Bigorre, Madame Langlois, and your mamma. Not a soul of us had dined, so that we were quite voracious ; it was the finest repast for Lent that could possibly be seen ; the nicest fish dressed to a charm ; the choicest ragouts and the best of cooks ; never was there such a solid good supper. We heartily wished for you ; but the wine of St. Laurence so perfectly renewed your remembrance, that there was a filling of little glasses, which plainly demonstrated that the liquor came from you. You have no good fish, my dear child, in your sea ; I remember very well we could get no soals nor sea-dragons. I cannot conceive how you can get over Lent ; as to me, I have not been sensible of it, and M. de Lamoignon, though so much out of order, has never once tasted meat.

Every thing now is incomprehensible ; when time is disagreeable to me, as at present, and I wish for a better and expect it, I push it forward as you do ; and then again when I consider its transitory value and rotation, and that it also pushes me forward, I stop short, and leave every thing to the will of God : I find no other prop or support against wretched futurity, which I have in perspective, but the will of God and his providence ; we should be too miserable not to be allowed this consolation. *If you knew the gift of God**, I recollect the excellence of this sermon. I heard a fine discourse made that day, by father Soanen ; the Samaritan was not dishonoured ; how grievous to see her disfigured by unworthy preachers ! this afflicts me. All those of this year are attended to, when the great Pan does not preach ; this great Pan is a second Bourdaloue, who last year left father de la Tour †, and even father de la Roche ‡ ; with the Abbe Anselme, who shines at St. Paul's, and father Gaillard, who works miracles at St. Germain de l'Auxerrois, to preach alone to empty seats. Adieu, my dearest and most amiable girl, do not amuse yourself to answer this chit-chat ; consider

* *Si scires donum Dei, Joan. 4. 5.*

† Afterwards general of the oratoire.

‡ A celebrated preacher of the oratoire.

consider that I have only one letter to write, if I had another to pen, I should not undertake it.

LETTER DCLXXIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday March 30, 1689.

THANK God, my dear child, you are at length arrived, you are safe upon the same shore as us. You are no longer agitated by uncertainty, you now know as much as we do ; but I seriously tell you, the trifling care I have taken, and the little services I have done you, are over-rated by you. You talk of obligation and acknowledgment, as if you had forgot the commerce of friendship, and were ignorant of the pleasure of taking some steps for those we love ; ours have been overpayed by their success ; we ought to thank you for giving us this opportunity of awaking our zeal ; to this you add thanks, and such pretty compliments and civilities as throw us into the utmost confusion ; I know not whether the Chevalier is as much ashamed as I am. I was not sensible that my narration was lively ; it most certainly fell far short of M. Gaillard's eyes ; I figure to myself his admiring and expressive mien, which proves that his admiration is not the daughter of ignorance. In a word, my dear child, you were then pleased with the picture I gave you of our victory. The Chevalier has just told me, that upon Madame de Buri's* return from Paris, the Princess of Conti asked her what she had done there. Madame, I have been to solicit ; in what cause ? that against Messieurs de Grignan ; what ! do you push this chicanery ; oh fy ! can any people begin again when they have once lost a cause as you had done ? I beg pardon, child, of the Chevalier's noble soul ; I must own this discourse gave my soul of clay some pleasure. This is Buri's manner at Versailles, you know how she behaves in the Grand Council, and the court of inquests ; so that you conclude she deserves the same inscription (*annulled*) upon her back as upon her petition. She was coming from a judge as I entered ; she said to him, upon seeing me, *Sir, I leave you in good bands* ; the air with which

she

* Sister to M. de Aiguebonne.

she uttered these words gave me some emotion, and in this situation I had sense enough to say nothing ; I had, nevertheless, some few things to tell her, but I was silent. If you follow your friend's advice, you will regulate your affairs, to come this winter and complete what is to be done ; for with the arret you are possessed of, there is nothing to be feared ; but what is done, is done, and you will settle the judgment of the bill of review with M. de Grignan's knightship, and a very few of the court ; you will also see your son ; these considerations united will induce you to take so eligible a resolution. Your comparison of M. Gui, who is mad enough to want to be condemned in all the courts, with that ideot who is ever endeavouring to revive a dead corpse, without being able to accomplish his design, has greatly humbled me : I find the good use you make of this tale, which was one day entirely lost in my hands, in company with the Chevalier ; this was a great misfortune, for I think the story excellent. You have restored it to life, my dear girl, and I think you have applied it very well.

We hear that the K. of E. is arrived in Ireland, where he was received with transport. The P. of O. is so much afflicted with an asthma, that all the troops he raises desert, fancying he is going to die : seven regiments have left him to go into Scotland. As to me, I am persuaded that the K. of E. with God's assistance, will surmount all his enemies, and dispel all those clouds that seem ready to break upon us. The Swiss are all softened : M. Amelot is doing wonders there ; this is great news. M. de Beauvillier, M. de Lamoignon, and Easter, will reconcile all those violent bickerings at the carrying off of Miss Vaubrun, which affair I have related to you ; the public will be a gainer by the absence of that villain B.

LETTER DCLXXIV.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday April 1, 1689.

WE still think of setting out as soon as the holidays are over ; I cannot get the better of my melancholy at the thought of being so distant from you ; I know

I know not how this journey will turn out. I do not think I shall see my son, who is quite in despair to think of the tremendous expence he will be at to head his militia in Lower Britanny. He admires the work that is cut out for him by the P. of O. this *d'Aiguëbonne* of Europe, as you very properly call him; and by what dispositions or disorders Providence is pleased to seek him in his woods, and shew him to the world in a war in that part.

Your letters of the 27th are before me. I find you are indisposed, my dear child; you see sometimes that your stomach talks, you see that your head talks too: nothing can be clearer than that you break it to shatters; in a word, that your head-ach arises either from your reading or writing too intensely; for you find yourself at ease, when you desist from these violent exercises, and such they are: that poor head, so good, so well turned, so capable of the greatest things, begs for quarter; this is not explaining one's self ambiguously; take pity of it then, my dear girl, you should consider it as impracticable to keep up our double correspondence, answer all the casual letters that come daily to hand, besides writing to Madame de Vins three times a week; this is not living, it is dying for us; this is very obliging. When I see you writing upon large paper, methinks I see you mounted upon one of your high horses; you gallop away very well, I acknowledge; but you go too far, and I can no longer endure the consequences. Take pity then of yourself and us; as to me, if I had occasion, after having wrote to you, to write another letter of the same length, I would not even attempt it. If you should think I dwell too much upon this matter, the truth is I have it too much at heart. I hope that the Chevalier will, through M. de Cavoie, prevent my paying the *interest upon interest*, in paying 17,000 livres, which I have now in my pocket, by the assistance of my daughter-in-law *; if this be the case, I desire you will thank him, the way is somewhat long for so lively an acknowledgment as mine, but this is the most worthy of the benefit. I shall be charmed to find M. de Grignan has himself answered your sister-in-law; she

* Jane-Margaret de Brehand de Mauron, Marchioness de Sevigne.

she writes to me a thousand compliments and provocations for him ; it is, she says, a disposition she ineffectually combats ; in a word, she must be rallied with a little, it is the bent of her mind.

Your son is not now in the least exposed ; enjoy, my dear girl, this tranquillity. There has been some little skirmishing in other places : Chamilli has been somewhat beaten, and Gandelu is very much wounded ; but Toiras has had a brilliant little clash, in which he has defeated or taken three or four hundred men. The affairs of England go well, the P. of O's credit every day diminishes. A wag wrote upon the palace-gate at Whitehall *, " This house to be lett at Midsummer." Scotland and Ireland are entirely against this Prince. The K. of E. has been very well received in Ireland ; he has insured the protestants every kind of liberty and protection, provided they were faithful to him. The Lord Lieutenant is Madame Hamilton's husband. We must see what turn these affairs take ; it appears to me like a large thick black cloud of hail, which begins to grow lighter. We have seen such as these at Livri, that have gone off without a storm. God guides every thing. Adieu, my dear girl, take care of yourself, make Paulina write, whilst you rest yourself in your closet.

LETTER DCLXXV.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday April 6, 1689.

I ACQUAINT you from Madame de la Fayette, and the numerous group of hypochondriacs, that vapours arising from the spirits being exhausted, are the most dangerous and the most difficult to cure ; after this if you exhaust yourself, and are pleased to have the head-ach to that degree that you cannot stoop without pain, force yourself to write and read, you will soon find yourself incapable of any thing, and become a mere vegetation. As this disorder arises solely from your incessant writing, I conjure you to be less studious, if you love us ; repose yourself upon your bed when you

* The palace of the King of England at London, situate in the suburb of Westminster.

you have a mind to communicate your sentiments, and make Paulina write ; this will teach her to think and dispose her thoughts ; you will preserve yourself, and we shall converse with you in this manner, without its being any expence to you. I wish you had been blooded, what inconvenience can arise from it ? This would open your veins, and give the blood more room to circulate in ; but you will not be persuaded. This dear herb (*perriwinkle*) would do wonders in such a situation ; I am glad to find you met with it at hand, one might be induced to think it was formed on purpose for you ; when you recover your beauty, it will be asked upon what herb did she tread ? and I will answer *perriwinkle*. I know not why you should be in such a hurry to go these holidays to Grignan, without your husband. Nothing could be so clever as being at St. Mary's, and avoid a while the dust and buildings of Grignan. If I understand you, M. d'Arles is there ; I used this name to avoid saying the Coadjutor, or the Archbishop ; there is great invention in this discovery. Let us say a word more about our victory in the Great Council, it has given us a good opinion of our guides ; to say the truth it was pretty and gallant ; every thing was rapid, it was a crowned work we carried sword and hand. Nobody but you can carry the bill of review, though much easier, because we shall all be separated in a moment, and one person alone cannot undertake it ; as to me, I shall not engage without my colonel *.

It rains incessantly, I have endeavoured to put Madame de Chaulnes out of her road, that she may put off her journey for a week ; I shall pay my money to-morrow to the Syndic of Britanny ; he receives it on account of the principal and interest ; I shall make my protestations, and say " I have paid the sum that I owe upon the inventory ; that I am quit, and that I neither can nor ought to pay the *interest upon interest*, as this would be usury." I would that this were tried by the States, but I am afraid it will come on here before the Commissaries, I will draw back as much as I can : but enough of this, it has grieved me, and it is over.

No

* The Chevalier de Grignan.

No one knows what is become of M. d'Enrichemont. But M. de Brionne is to sign to-morrow his marriage-articles with Madame d'Espinai, a rich heiress of a great family *. It seems the intelligence from England is in our favour: neither the Irish, Scotch, or English are attached to the P. of O. It is certain that your son is too amiable; this is both good and evil; but God preserve him, which I utter with that tone of voice that flows from your heart, and which penetrates mine, for it is the characteristic of truth. Adieu, my dear child, I am not troubled with vapours, yet I will not write any longer, it is late, it rains, and I must send away my letters. I must ask you one question, which you must answer me sincerely; are you not chagrined, though you smile at your jealousy? How are you with Madame D. it does not seem to me that you have availed yourself of either her wit or conversation.

LETTER DCLXXVI.

To the Same.

Paris, Good-Friday April 8, 1689.

I DID not expect your letters to-day, my dear girl, I must retire to-night, as I perform my Easter devotions to-morrow; it is precisely you that I want to estrange a little from my mind. I heard a very fine sermon this morning preached by the Abbe Anselme at St. Paul's; I was quite prejudiced against him, I thought him a Gascon, and this was sufficient to destroy all faith in what he said; but he compelled me to lay aside this unjust opinion, and I find him one of the best preachers I ever heard; he was wit, devotion, grace, and eloquence; in a word, there are very few I prefer before him. I wish you were not treated like dogs in the provinces, and that they sent you a man similar to him. How is it possible to listen to your preachers? this does religion a prejudice.

Madame de Chaulnes wants to go before the *Quasimodo*. I have just made some little arrangements, which will be admirable, in case of an alarm, to secure your repose. Do not mention this again to me, when you write;

* This marriage did not take place till the twenty-third of December following.

write; the Chevalier approves of it, and that is enough. Here ends my letter, I shall add four lines to-night, I am going to Tenebres, and from thence to St. Paul's.

Here I am returned, my dear child, and I take my leave of you, desiring you will rest and make Paulina work, if you are inclinable to answer my chat; otherwise do not attend to it, write me short letters, and keep well, this is all I desire.

LETTER DCLXXVII.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday April, 11, 1689.

YOU have, at length, my dear child, left Aix; you seem to me to have it constantly before your eyes. You are now at Grignan, do you find yourself better in this solitude, with all the inconveniencies that have there arisen? I cannot help thinking that your fondness for retirement is, in fact, nothing more than being a constant disciple to despair and melancholy; you are afraid lest dissipation should, in some measure, abate those apprehensions you are willing constantly to cherish for your dear child, whenever he is in the least danger: I think, perhaps, but too justly; but you must be very cruel to yourself, not to profit, at least of that time, when the little gentleman is easy, to be the same also on your part, instead of anticipating peril as you seem to do. I believe we shall set out the day after to-morrow, in the morning; I am ridiculously melancholy at a journey I am willing to take, which I ought to take, and which I do take with all imaginable convenience. Madame de Carman*, is to go again with us, she is an amiable woman; a great retinue, two coaches and six, a farrier, eight horsemen; in a word, quite grand; we shall lie at Malicorne; could you wish for a more agreeable opportunity? You will at first direct your letters to me at Rennes, and I will inform you when to address them to Vitre; I shall be surfeited with the noise and bustle at Rennes; I only go there to see Madame de Chaulnes. The Chevalier will go from thence to Versailles,

* Mary-Anne du Pui de Murinais, Marchioness de Carman.

failles, I thought he would never have left me till he had seen me hanged*, but he has business; I am greatly affected at the thoughts of his absence, it is a real consolation for me to converse with him, about you and your concerns, ever productive of an agreeable union; we meet to talk upon what we have solely at heart; the Chevalier is strong, I am weak; he can easily do without me, but I cannot without him; meditation will be my employment, and here I shall converse with you; but I shall still be wanting in that prop which was so necessary and agreeable to me; we must tear ourselves from every thing, and wean ourselves from all that is desirable. Tell me your intentions with regard to the bill of review, will you acquaint M. d'Arles with it? will you not yourself return for it? As to us, every one may go his own way; we are satisfied with having gained our little victory. Let me hear from you, my dear girl, and of what relates to you; consider that I can learn nothing more from the Chevalier; you may appoint Paulina to write to me trifling occurrences, as you know there is nothing I dread so much as overwhelming you.

The misunderstanding between the duke d'Estrees and M. de Gevres is accommodated; his nose is repaired with the noses of the Bet—. Mademoiselle de V. so often repeated that she would be a nun, that she has been placed amongst the *filles bleues* of St. Dennis. To which the world adds that *madcap* is no longer in France. I have no news for you. Madame de Meri has been very ill of a bilious vomit, she has taken a little tartar emetic, and is now recovered. Adieu, my dear child, preserve for me that friendship which constitutes the happiness of my life: I will not communicate to you all my tenderness nor all my weakness.

LETTER DCLXXVIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Tuesday April 12, at night, 1689.

IF your letters, which I expect, come to hand to-night, I will answer them upon the road, or at latest at Malicorne. We shall set out to-morrow morning, and

* See Scene IX. Act III. of Moliere's Mock-Doctor.

and lay at Bonnelle ; the others will depart at eight or nine o'clock ; Madame de Chaulnes, who is vigilance itself, will set off at day-break. You know, that in going to Bourbon, I should rather accommodate myself to her manners, than endeavour to correct them ; so I shall pursue my journey, and by the facility of my disposition, nothing will displease me. All the security and precautions that can be desired in a journey, I shall find in this ; and I shall not even have occasion to be frightened, to cry out and blush, our good Duchess takes upon her all these things, and I shall go through it with all the external marks of courage and resolution, in comparison to her seeming fear and timidity ; thus are undeserved eulogiums obtained. I have given all necessary orders for the receipt of your letters at Malicorne, Vitre, and afterwards at Rennes ; I will write to you again as soon as possible ; but be not under any concern if you do not receive your letters regularly, as this will be the fault of the weather and the post. I am still under some affliction at my departure ; how can I reflect upon the situation of your affairs without chagrin ? the death of the Archbishop (of Arles) still overcomes you. I fear, I know not why, that your eagerness of getting to Grignan has given you real trouble. The Chevalier was a little uneasy that you set out from Aix, without discharging entirely your loan, there are some things that should not be omitted : they escape our memory, as soon as we are absent. Please God we may see one another in a short time : God preserve you, take care of your health ; mine is of great consequence to me, by reason of the interest you take in it. I have been taking some leaves this morning upon your account, which alone made them agreeable. Adieu, my most amiable Countess, I cry, what folly ! it is owing to this double absence and estrangement. See M. la Garde, keep up your spirits, and do not give way to melancholy, avail yourself of your courage, and execute the decrees of Providence.

LET-

LETTER DCLXXIX.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday April 13, late at night, 1689.

OUR journey is not only postponed for to-day, but we shall not set out for Britanny these twelve days, by reason of M. de Chaulnes journey to Nantes. His lady called upon me this morning, to ask me if I were inclinable to go and pass ten days with her at Chaulnes ; or whether we should meet upon a day appointed at Rouen, in order to go to Britanny by the way of Caen : I did not hesitate ; I am so much upon the wing, and so entirely absent in imagination from Paris, that I am going to rest myself at Chaulnes ; Madame de Carman is of the same way of thinking. So it is decided, and we shall set out to-morrow for Chaulnes ; but you, my dear girl, you are at Grignan ; I enter into all your uneasiness, and feel it. You were greatly terrified lest there should be no war, and you were thinking to what part of Europe you should be obliged to send your son. Providence has baffled your thoughts ; all Europe is in a blaze, you have not thought of the P. of O. who is the Attila of this period. Some important news is circulated to-day, which will make a considerable diversion ; the King of Poland is upon the point of declaring war against the Emperor, upon twenty subjects of complaint ; and the Turk not having made peace, there will not be much to fear upon the borders of the Rhine. In fine, my daughter, every thing is settled in heaven, every thing is in the hands of God. This lad is already habituated to the profession, has capacity, and is well instructed, having seen three sieges in seven years time : this is what you did not think of, but what God saw from all eternity. Tell me how Paulina employs herself. Adieu, my most amiable girl, consider you are a woman of fortitude ; if you had not war at home, you would be in search of it ; may God preserve your son, he is in his hands, and you should hope to see him again in good health : think of the many perils from which he has snatched

the Chevalier, and that your child will follow the steps of his uncle.

LETTER DCLXXX.

To the Same.

Chaulnes, Sunday April 17, 1689.

I AM waiting for your letter of Friday; how melancholy it is that I can no longer hear from you regularly three times a week! this is just what I have at heart, and which I called my *small affliction*; but really it is not small, and I shall be sensible of this privation. The Chevalier wrote to me a little adieu from Versailles, full of tenderness, and it greatly affected me; for he cruelly forgets the share we have in his esteem; and as it is most passionately desired, it is a real joy he deprives his friends of. I thanked him for his letter, by another which I wrote at my departure: he informed me that your son would not be of a certain detachment, as the thing that had been talked of was no longer a subject of attention, which afforded my heart much relief; and as he has acquainted you with it, you must breathe as I do. I but too well comprehend all your anxieties, they return upon me, so that I feel them on both hands.

I set out then, my beloved girl, on Thursday, with Madame de Chaulnes and Madame de Carman; we were in the best coach, drawn by the best horses, with the greatest equipage, farriers, horsemen, and conveniences, and every possible precaution. We lay that night at Pont, in a pretty little inn, and the next day we arrived here. The roads are very bad; but this house is very fine and has a grand air, though it is without furniture, and the gardens are neglected. There is scarce any verdure to be seen, and not one swallow yet; in a word, it is still winter the seventeenth of April. But it is easy to imagine the beauties of these walks; every thing is regular and magnificent, a great *parterre* in front, bowling-greens opposite the wings, a large *jet d'eau* in the *parterre*, two in the bowling-greens, and another at a distance in the middle of a field, which is very properly called *the solitary*; a fine country, handsome apartments, and

an agreeable view, though flat; elegant furniture, which I have not yet seen; in a word, a house worthy of all those panegyrics you have heard upon it in prose and verse. The Duchefs is so good, so amiable, and so obliging to me, that if you love me, which I do not in the least doubt, you must necessarily be very much obliged to her for all the friendly civilities she pays me. We shall remain in this agreeable house six or seven days; and then we shall go through Normandy to Rennes, and set out about the second or third of next month. This, my dear girl, is all I can tell you about myself, and that I enjoy the most perfect health in the world; but you, my child, how are you? at what a distance I am from you! but how near is your remembrance! and how can I avoid being melancholy?

I received your letter of holy Saturday, the ninth of April; my child, you undertake too much, you abuse your youth, you find your head incapable of going through it, that you exhaust yourself with the number of your letters; if you do not attend in time the consequences may be fatal; you refuse being blooded, but why did not you undergo this operation at Aix before you began to keep Lent? in fine, I am displeased with you and your health. Your reasons for lengthening your stay at Avignon are very just, it is too early for Grignan, the dreadful winter and horrid winds are still to be feared there. As to your bill of review, the Chevalier and me are now incapable of serving you; he expects to set out every moment; my departure has already taken place, this is not the work of a day; Hercules could not defeat Antæus *, nor root out his wicked practices in three months; this business must then be M. d'Arles's department. These reasons united, made me say, that if you could come this winter with M. de Grignan, you must, according to all appearances, put an end to this affair; your presence would have wrought miracles. You talk to me of the dispositions of the people of Provence, those of this country are not so difficult to comprehend, they

* The giant of Lybia, son to Neptune and the Earth, smothered by Hercules.

may be discovered in a moment ; but you, my dearest girl, are too amiable, too grateful ; truly, in all the acknowledgments you make me, I see myself, they are the tenderest and noblest in the world ; preserve your sentiments, your thoughts, and the rectitude of your mind ; we take sometimes a review of them, just as we smell at Hungary-water, when we are in a bad air ; adopt nothing of the country in which you are, but take care of what you carried thither ; and, above all things, my dear child, pay attention to your health, if you love me, and are willing I should return.

LETTER DCLXXXI.

To the Same.

Chaulnes, Tuesday April 19, 1689.

I EXPECT your letters ; the post comes in three times a week, and I have an inclination to stay here. I now then begin to write to you, to acquaint you with my thoughts ; for I have now no other news to tell you, so that my letters cannot be very entertaining ; nor will you meet with any thing new, as you have long since known that I love you, and how I love you ; you therefore should, instead of reading my letters, leave them unopened, and say I know all that my mother is going to tell me ; but being persuaded that you will not have the power of acting thus, I must tell you, I am very uneasy about your health, and your head-ach. I am terrified at the air of Grignan ; a wind that can tear up by the roots trees whose towering heads reached the skies, and whose feet touched the empire of the dead *, makes me tremble ; I fear lest it should carry away my daughter, exhaust her, dry her up, deprive her of rest, her plumpness, and beauty ; all these apprehensions, I acknowledge to you, chill me, and deprive me of all repose. I was the other day walking alone in those beautiful alleys, Madame de Chaulnes being shut up about her business, and Madame de Carman too delicate to walk ; I therefore confersed with the Rocks ; I entered into

all

* See the fable of the oak and the rivulet, by La Fontaine, fable 22.

all these melancholy thoughts, and nevertheless found some pleasure in being alone. I read over three or four of your letters; you talk of good writing, nobody in the world writes better than yourself; how easily do you express yourself in a few words, and how you range them! this perusal touched my heart, and afforded contentment to my mind. This is a very agreeable house, and we are quite unconstrained; you are acquainted with the good and permanent qualities of this Duchess. Madame de Carman is a very amiable woman, I have felt for her; she has much more merit and wit than she displays; she is very far from being as ignorant as the common run of women, and has a good deal of knowledge, which she increases every day by reading good authors; it is a pity that her settlement should be at the extremity of Lower Britanny. When you are able to write to M. and Madame de Chaulnes, I will give them my share of your attention; you can write to me by Paulina, I know your style, and that is sufficient. I wish M. de Grignan were with you, I do not like your being alone in that castle, poor little Orithyas *! but Boreas is neither gallant nor civil to you; this is what afflicts me. Adieu, my dearest girl, respect your side, your head, and I know not what besides. I comprehend your affliction for your son, I feel it, through him whom I love, and through you whom I love still more; thus am I doubly assailed by anxiety.

Corbinelli, who is the best man in the world, is always with us, ever immersed in his Christian philosophy, for he reads nothing but holy books.

LETTER DCLXXXII.

To the Same.

Chaulnes, Friday April 22, 1689.

IT is a pity to quit a place that is so handsome, so charming, and where your letters come to hand three times a week; you know we all suffer without the one thing needful; and I must be greatly mistaken

* Orithyas, daughter to Erechtheus, King of Athens, was carried away by Boreas, King of Thrace; which gave rise to the fable of the rape of Orithyas, by the wind called Boreas.

to think of finding it where you are absent. We shall set out on Sunday with most charming weather, which has already afforded us here in three days all the beauties of spring. We shall lie at Amiens, and go from thence by Rouen, through Normandy, into Britanny. I will write to you from every place I can; I shall be only a few days at Rennes, to see M. de Chaulnes; and then I shall go to the Rocks; I should die if I were to stay any time at Rennes. But do you conceive how impatient I am to receive your letters, and to know whether you have been blooded, and how that good head of yours, which was never troublesome to you before, agrees with the air of Grignan? How I hate those vapours that arise from the spirits being exhausted! they are very difficult to cure, when the remedy consists in yielding to dullness, laying aside thought, and remaining inactive: to a person so lively and active as you are, it is perfect martyrdom; alas! as you say, it is a strange alternative, either to reckon the joists, or make one's self ill. I sometimes meditate upon this, and read over your letters at my leisure; and as I have nothing to do, I chatter without you, and begin my letter before yours is come to hand; but let not the employment of my leisure induce you to do the same: take care of yourself, and make Paulina write. I looked the other day at her writing, it is very like yours, and she spells well, which is very pretty. In fine, my dear Countess, avail yourself, I beseech you, of this little secretary, who pleases me very much. Paulina must commit your thoughts to paper; nothing can be more advantageous to either you or her.

We have seen M. de Chaulnes's machines, they are admirable, and formed upon a model of sublime simplicity. We see five large *jets-d'eau* in the parterre and bowling-greens; a watering-place, which is a little canal; fountains for the office, kitchen, and wash-house; and formerly there was no water to drink. Admire his courage, for all this country rallied him; he cut twenty alleys through cabbages, into a young shrubbery that was not seen, but is now perfectly beautiful; and all this was done whilst he was at Britanny

or

or at Versailles. My God! my dear child, how dangerous my leisure is to you! I fear it will do you harm; it is tinctured with the melancholy of my reveries. I am sensibly affected at being deprived of the Chevalier's conversation; this union, which was so natural, afforded me great consolation. I am also very uneasy that I have not heard from the Marquis; how many sacrifices are to be made to God! I often perceive him in every thing that happens; and we are all very feeble and tremulous under the Almighty's hand, who shakes Europe at present in such a manner, that it would be difficult to say what may be the consequence of this universal cloud.

Here is your letter of the fourteenth that gives me joy; your head-ach has in some degree subsided, you will not allow it to be called vapours; but what shall we do if you deprive us of this word? for it is used for every thing; until you Cartesians produce another in its room, I must ask leave to use it. Strive then to cure you: self of these disorders and giddiness, which incapacitate us for every thing. The pain in your side has also given me much uneasiness; we have not been afflicted with it for a long time; stick to the admirable periwinkle, and acquaint me with the state of your health; I always enjoy mine perfectly well, notwithstanding some chagrin that there is no avoiding. I admire the limits you are willing to give my life; this turn and this expression are worthy of your tenderness, and I am sensible of its value. We here leave the first dawnings of this charming spring; this castle is very beautiful, but the elevation of yours seems rather to resemble the palace of Apollo.

LETTER DCLXXXIII.

To the Same.

Chaulnes, Sunday April 24, 1689.

WE thought of setting out to-day, my dear girl, but it will not take place till to-morrow. Madame de Chaulnes was the night before just so ill of a sore throat, and had so much difficulty to swallow, and her ear was so much swelled, that Madame Carman and myself did not know what to do: at Paris

they would have bled her immediately, but here she was rubbed with balsam of ease, her ear stopt, and covered with brown paper ; she lay very warmly, and was somewhat feverish : in truth, my child, there was something miraculous in what we were spectators of. This precious balsam performed a complete cure in one night's time ; she had next day, neither swelling, sore throat, nor kernels, so that she was able to *play at chuck*, and it was only through mere fashion that she kept her room one day ; really this remedy is divine, take special care of what you have of it, one should never be without this assistance. But, my dear child, how sorry I am for your head-ach ! what do you think of telling me you resemble M. Pascal ? you kill me. It is true that to write like him is a fine thing, nothing can be so charming : but the cruel case of having a head so delicate and so exhausted as his, which has been the torment of his life, and has now cut him off in the midst of his career ! we may split our heads without being always immersed in Euclid's propositions ; when the spirits are exhausted to a certain degree, this has the same effect. I fear also that the air of Grignan may be unsavourable to you ; how shocking this is ! I fear already that your frame is devoured and emaciated ; would it please God that your air was as perfectly serene as this is ! methinks you sincerely regret that of Livri ; as cursed as it was sometimes to those ill-disposed against it, we found it gentle and benign ; how charming were those showers ! we shall never forget that agreeable little spot. My child, none but Paulina is a gainer by your head-ach ; for she is too happy to write all your thoughts, and to learn to hate her mother, as you hate yours. She sees that you declare to me, that in order to enjoy your health, you must necessarily love me no longer : what is there good or agreeable that she is unacquainted with, since she has wrote for you ? what you say upon the rain is too pleasant ; what is that thing which we call rain ? how is it made ? is there such a thing ? and to compare that

that of Provence * to the tears of little children, who cry through anger and not good nature; nothing could be more pleasantly imagined; did not Paulina heartily laugh at it? once more I think her happy! you have not been blooded, my dear child, I dare not advise you so far off, bleeding may not, perhaps, be proper for those whose spirits are exhausted. You are too good to be fond of speaking of me; I am much more valuable according to your estimation, than in reality. I am quite easy here, would to God your health were as good as mine! but how grievous it is to be so distant from each other! it is impossible now to embrace, this was not the case at Paris. Would that your buildings were erected, as were formerly the walls of Thebes by Amphion ||; you pretend to be ignorant, I am persuaded that Paulina is capable of giving an account of this passage of the fable.

LETTER DCLXXXIV.

To the Same.

Pecquigni, Wednesday April 27, 1689.

WE set out on Monday from Chaulnes, in order to lie at Amiens, where Madame de Chaulnes is honoured and revered as you are in Provence; this is the only parallel case I ever knew. The Intendant † gave us a very elegant *meagre* supper, on account of its being St. Mark's day; yesterday we dined *en gras* to perfection. After dinner we arrived here at a castle that displays all the pride of the heiress of Pecquigni ‡. It is an old building, raised above the

* It rains very seldom in Provence, sometimes even not at all, or so little in the summer, that the earth is more frequently parched than humid.

|| Amphion, the son of Jupiter and Antiope, was considered as the inventor of music, insomuch that the poets feigned that the rocks followed him, and that the stones at the sound of his lyre disposed themselves without assistance to raise the walls of Thebes.

† M. Chauvelin.

‡ Claire Charlotte d'Ailli, only daughter and heiress of Philibert Emanuel d'Ailli, lord of Pecquigni, Vidame of Amiens, wedded Honoria d'Albert, marshal of France, and father to Charles d'Ailli, Duke of Chaulnes, who is mentioned in this letter.

city, like Grignan ; an admirable fine chapter, as at Grignan ; a dean and twelve canons ; but I know not if the foundation is as handsome ; here are terrasses upon the river Somme, which produce a great number of variegated turnings in the fields, which indeed are not to be found at Grignan. There is one of Cæsar's camps about a quarter of a league from hence, whose entrenchments are still venerated ; this is a companion to the bridge of du Gard *. You say to me, " What, dear mother, are you a doing of ? do you not go into Britanny ?" to this I answer ; " Daughter, we shall go ; but as M. de Chaulnes will not be at Rennes till the ninth of next month, we have time enough, and we shall not set out from hence these two days." This delay is not disagreeable to me, as I shall take my measures here to go to Nantes in the month of June or July ; I do not expect to have any real satisfaction all this while, as I shall not see you ; thus did I consider the journey ; I look and hope for another period, which is at God's disposal, as well as every thing else in this world. But I often reflect upon your health, your head, and that impetuous air that destroys you : the goodness of your castle-walls pleases you ; and I admire your own goodness, which exposes you to this violence. Adieu, my dearest girl, I embrace you, without being able to tell you how tenderly and sensibly I love you. I am reading the life of the Duke d'Epernon, which comprehends almost a whole century, and is very amusing.

LETTER DCLXXXV.

To the Same.

Pecquigny, Saturday April 30, 1689.

IF I may give credit to the wind, my dear girl, I am certainly at Grignan ; the north wind in the open country cannot be more violent. For my part I imagine we are upon the point of entering into such an intemperate month of May, as we have often seen

at

* This bridge, which is a beautiful structure, is an ancient work of the Romans, upon the Gardon in Lower Languedoc ; it is built of hewn stone, of an amazing length and thickness, and has three stories of arches one above another.

at Livri. We have been in this handsome house these three days, where we have a most agreeable perspective ; we shall set out in an hour for Rouen, which we shall reach to-morrow, and where I shall find your letters ; it is a melancholy consideration for me to have been deprived of them these six days ; they are so much the necessary subsistence of my heart and mind, that I languish when they are wanting. We should have been at Rouen three days ago, if some business that Madame de Chaulnes has had to transact, and a desire of not reaching Rennes till the ninth of May, had not made us remain here. As for me, I am very little concerned at being a month upon the road, the interruption of your correspondence is the only thing that makes me uneasy ; I passed ten days very agreeably at Chaulnes, receiving your letters regularly three times a week. I have been to Amiens, and have seen the castle of Pecquigny, and have sent my orders into Britanny, I shall not be better off at Rennes ; the Rocks alone will afford me an agreeable solitude ; this tranquillity could not escape me. I am quite destitute of news at present ; I am ignorant of the state of your health, if you have been ill, and whether Boreas still terrifies you ; I have many dreads upon your account, I must acknowledge. I know not how you would have acted with respect to Mademoiselle d'Alerac's marriage * ; I know nothing about the Cheyalier nor the Marquis ; I have these matters greatly at heart. I hope I shall gain intelligence to-morrow at Rouen, from whence I will write to you again ; the only reason of my writing to-day is, that this shocking letter may be forwarded on Monday, and that you may not have occasion to add to the number of your uneasinesses, that of being doubtful about the state of my health, which is perfectly good ; I wish yours was as perfect ; my love for you induces me to take care of myself ; I eat nothing but what is fit for you, never two meals alike, Madame de Chaulnes and Madame de Carman follow the same regimen. You see, my child, I am persuaded of your friendship, as I no way lower that agreeable

* Frances Julia de Grignan, married the sixth of May following to Henry Emanuel Hurault, Marquis de Vibraie.

agreeable tone, which tells me my conversation is agreeable to you ; cherish, then, the same regard for me, not doubting that my affection is full as great as yours, and its foundation far greater. Adieu, my dear child. I do, indeed, love Paulina, I find myself prejudiced in her favour ; methinks in the little altercations between you, I should be her advocate.

Madame de Chaulnes and Madame de Carman say a thousand obliging civil things to you. The latter is a great reader, she knows a little of every thing ; I am also somewhat of her complexion, so that our superficial learning agrees very well.

LETTER DCLXXXVI.

To the Same.

Pontean-de-Mer, Monday May 2, 1689.

I LAY last night at Rouen, from whence I wrote you a line, only to acquaint you that I had received two of your letters with much tenderness : I do not give way to all the tenderness it would excite in me, it dissipates me, and I should too frequently give way to retirement, and avoid society ; in a word, I feel, but do not enter into a deep disquisition of it. Rouen is eleven leagues from Pontean-de-Mer, we are come here to lie. I have seen the finest country in the world, the most pleasant fields, and all the meanderings of the most beautiful Seine, whose banks, for four or five leagues, yield in nothing to the Loire ; they are graceful, are decorated with houses and trees, young willows, and little canals that are cut from this great river ; it is, indeed, fine ; I had no idea of Normandy, I was too young when I saw it ; alas ! there is not, perhaps, one soul to be found of all those I formerly saw ; this is a melancholy reflection ! I hope to find at Caen, which we shall reach on Wednesday, your letter of the twenty-first, and that of M. de Chaulnes. I never ceased eating with the Chevalier till my departure, Lent did not occasion any separation ; I was charmed to converse with him upon your business, I am infinitely sensible of this privation ; methinks I am in an unknown country, never to enter upon these matters. Corbinelli would never spend the evenings

evenings with him, his philosophy led him to bed, I saw him in the morning, and the Abbe Bigorre often came to tell us news.

I shall be attentive to your return, which will regulate mine; I long for the expedition. When I set out, M. de Lamoignon was at Bayeux with Coulanges. Madame du Lude, and Madame de Verneuil, came from their convents to bid me adieu; they all met at my house with Madame de Vins, who was just returned from Savigny. Madame de Lavardin came also with the Marchioness d'Huxelles, Madame de Mouci, Madame de la Rochefoucault, and Madame du Bois; so many farewells made my heart very heavy. I had the preceding day embraced Madame de la Fayette, this was the day after the holidays; I was quite astonished at my departure; but, my dear girl, I was going to greet the coming of spring in every place I passed; it is a beautiful spring, and so young and gentle, that I wish for you every moment, instead of that cruel Boreas, that overturns you, and kills me whenever I think of it.

I embrace Paulina, and I pity her want of taste for history, it is a great amusement; does she, at least, like to read *Moral Essays* and *Abbadie* *, as well as her dear mamma? Madame de Chaulnes pays you a thousand friendly regards, she takes great care of me, indeed too much. It is impossible to travel through a more beautiful verdure, more agreeably, sumptuously, or freely. Adieu, thou most amiable girl, this is enough from Ponteau-de-Mer, I will write to you from Caen.

LETTER DCLXXXVII.

To the Same.

Caen, Thursday May 5, 1689.

I WAS doubtful whether I should here receive the letter of the twenty-first of April, which I had not received at Rouen; it would have been a pity to have lost it. Good God! with what a taste, what a heart, for taste flows from the heart, what a manner

* Author of an excellent Treatise upon the Truth of the Christian Religion.

ter do you talk of your affection? It is true, my dear Countess, that the business of Avignon affords great consolation: if, as you say, it happened to people at the flow of their finances, how greatly would it facilitate a journey to Paris! your expences have been very great, and this will only make up deficiencies; but again, as I said the other day, you must have lived to receive these favours from Providence; nevertheless, my child, this same Providence will enable you, by another channel, to come to Paris; we must wait its determinations.

It is not easy to comprehend how the Chevalier, with so many complaints, will be able to make a campaign; but it seems that he is at least inclined to shew he is willing, and hath a sincere desire; this, I believe, no-body doubted. He is much inclined to go to Balaruc for the sake of the waters; I have seen the natural approbation which the Capuchins gave these waters, and as they strengthen his good opinion of them, this journey must be considered as he pleases; he has good sense, and knows what he is doing. But our Marquis, heavens, what a man! will you believe us another time? When you are inclined to draw consequences from all his childish fears, we told you that he would be the thunderbolt of war; he is one, and you have made him such; in truth, he is an amiable boy, his growing merit will certainly carry him great lengths; *God preserve him*, I am persuaded you do not doubt of my manner of uttering this.

I do not think you will have the courage to obey your father *Lanterne*; would you not afford Paulina, who has much sense, the pleasure of making some use of it, in reading the beautiful pieces of Corneille, *Polyeuctes*, *Cinna*, and the others? To have only this scrap of devotion, without being induced by the grace of God, seems to me like being booted without stockings; it has no connection or conformity with all the rest. I do not find that M. and Madame de Pomponne treat *Felicite* in the same manner*, who learns Italian,

* Catherine-Felicite Arnauld de Pomponne, widow to John-Baptist Colbert, Marquis de Torci, and minister of state.

and every thing necessary to form the mind ; I am persuaded that she will study and explain the fine works in question. They have brought up Madame de Vins in the same manner †, and do not omit teaching their daughter how to be perfectly a christian, what it is to be a christian, with all the beauty and solidity of our religion: this is all I shall say to you upon this head. I believe that Paulina imitates you in having an aversion to history ; it appears to me very amusing ; I am very well pleased with the life of the Duke d'Epernon by Girard ; it is not new, but it has been recommended to me by my friends, and Croisilles, who have read it with pleasure.

Let me speak a word about my journey, my dear child. We came in three days from Rouen hither, without any adventures, only fine weather and a charming spring, eating nothing but the best of every thing, going to rest early, without any kind of inconvenience. We arrived here this morning, we shall not set out till to-morrow, in order to reach Dol in three days, and then go to Rennes ; M. de Chaulnes waits for us with violent impatience. We were upon the sea-coast of Dive, where we lay ; this country is very fine, Caen is a very pretty city, the avenues agreeable, gay, and well situated ; the streets are handsome, the buildings elegant, and the churches sumptuous ; to this add, the fields and walks, and in a word, the source of all our geniusses §. Our friend Segrais is gone to Messieurs de Matignon, which much afflicts me. Adieu, thou most amiable woman, I embrace you a thousand times. You are now in the dust of your buildings.

LETTER DCLXXXVIII.

To the Same.

Dol, Monday May 9, 1689.

WE arrived here yesterday pretty much fatigued, and the carriages still more. This is the same spot where I came to see M. and Madame de Chaulnes four years ago. We came from Caen in two days

to

† Sister to Madame de Pomponne.

§ John-Renauld de Segrais, of the French academy, was of Caen, as well as Malherbe, Huet, &c.

to Avranches ; we found the good bishop * of this city dead and buried eight days before ; he was Tesse's uncle, a pious prelate, who was so much afraid of dying out of his diocese, that, to avoid this misfortune, he never quitted it. There are others, whom nothing but death could catch them in it. We found all the domestics of this man in tears ; his shade did not, however, fail to afford us a good supper and a comfortable lodging. I saw from my chamber-window the sea and mount St. Michael, this proud hill, which you saw so haughty, and which saw you so beautiful : it is with affection I recollect this journey ; we dined at Pontorson, do you remember it ? We were a long time upon the shore, constantly looking at this mountain, and I constantly thinking of my dear daughter. At length we arrived here, where I defy death to catch the bishop. We have found a guard belonging to M. de Chaulnes, who is employed in receiving all these troops, who come from every quarter ; the grief and astonishment of the inhabitants of Britanny is a melancholy thing, as these are things to which they have been estranged since the wars of the Counts de Montfort and Blois : in short, nothing but tears and lamentations are to be seen on every side. We shall rest to-day. My son is with his wife at Rennes ; I shall take up my lodging with good Madame Marbeuf, though she is not upon very good terms with this duke and duchess, she being entirely devoted to M. de Pontchartrain ; but I must submit to this small vexation ; I shall always pursue my own method, I am upon good terms with every body. It is only for the sake of conversing with you that I write ; for I have neither an answer to make you, nor any news to transmit. Adieu, I am in very good health, and have got rid of my fatigue : one travels very commodiously with this good duchess, she loves you and embraces you with all her heart.

* Gabriel-Philip de Froullai, Bishop of Avranches,

LETTER DCLXXXIX.

To the Same.

Rennes, Wednesday May 11, 1689.

HERE we are arrived at Rennes, we set out from Dol, which is ten leagues distant ; we have travelled just a hundred long leagues in eight days and a half. The dust hurts one's eyes ; but thirty women, who came to meet the Dutchess of Chaulnes, and whom we were obliged to embrace in the midst of all the dust and sun, and thirty or forty gentlemen, fatigued us much more than the journey had done. Madame de Carman, who is very delicate, fainted ; as to me, I went through the whole without any inconvenience. M. de Chaulnes came to dinner, and greatly testified his friendship and sincerity. I discovered my son in the whirlwind, we embraced each other cordially ; and his little wife was charmed to see me. I gave my place in Madame de Chaulnes's coach to M. de Rennes, and I went with M. de Chaulnes, Madame de Carman, and my daughter-in-law, in the bishop's coach ; we had only a league to go. I came to my son's to shift and refresh myself, and from thence went to sup at the hotel de Chaulnes ; I there met with the good Marchioness de Marbeuf, to whose house I returned to lie, and where I am lodged like a real princess of Tarentum, in a handsome chamber, hung with fine crimson velvet, and ornamented like that at Paris, and a good bed, in which I slept admirably ; the good woman is charmed to have me for a lodger, being very friendly, and entertaining the highest opinion of me, with which you would be greatly pleased. Here I am fixed for some days ; my daughter-in-law, like myself, squints at the Rocks, quite impatient to go and repose there ; she cannot long support the hurry and bustle occasioned by Madame de Chaulnes's arrival : we shall take our time ; I always thought her very lively and pretty, very fond of me, and charmed with you and M. de Grignan ; she has a taste for him that makes us laugh *. My son is very amiable, and appears very glad to see me ; he is

very

* Madame de Sevigne's daughter-in-law had never seen M. de Grignan.

very handsome in his person, enjoys perfect health, and is extremely lively and witty; he has dwelt much upon you, and your child, whom he loves; he has heard such praises of him, as affect and surprise him; for, like us, he imagined he was a little Scaramouch; and all that is related of him is solid and serious. Tell me a little about your health, my dear child, mine is perfectly good, which surprises me; you are troubled with giddiness; how did you dare give them this name, since you have exploded vapours? The pains in your legs hurt me; the Capuchin is no longer here, he is gone back to work with his dear comrade, whose eyes give you such disagreeable ideas; so that I can no longer obtain any advice, either for you or Paulina. I entreat you to animate this child's desire of pleasing you, and you will make her an accomplished woman; and I advise you to avail yourself of that facility you find in her, to serve you as a little secretary, with her free hand and good orthography; let this little woman, I say, assist you.

LETTER DCXC.

To the Same.

Rennes, Sunday May 15, 1689.

M. And Madame de Chaulnes keep us here with so much friendship, that it is difficult to refuse them a few more days. I imagine they will speedily set out for St. Malo's, where the King is making preparations; so that we shall testify great complaisance, without being at much expence. This good duchess has quitted her numerous circle, to come and visit me so much like a friend, that you would love her for it; she found me just going to write to you, and has desired me to acquaint you with the great glory she ascribes to herself in having conducted me in such good health. M. de Chaulnes often speaks to me of you; he is entirely taken up with the militia, it appears very strange to see people wear hats, who have never been accustomed to wear any thing but blue bonnets; they neither comprehend the exercise, nor what they are forbid doing; when their muskets were shouldered, and M. de Chaul-

nes

les appeared, and they wanted to salute him, their arms fell on one side, and their hats on the other ; they were told not to salute, and the instant after, when they were disarmed, if they saw M. de Chaulnes pass, they pressed their hats down with their two hands, and took special care to salute him. They have been told, that when in their ranks, they should not incline either to the right or left ; and they left themselves to be run over, the other day, by Madame de Chaulnes's coach, without budging a single step, notwithstanding all that was said to them. In a word, my child, the Lower Bretons are strange people ; I cannot conceive what method Bertrand du Guesclin took to make them in his time the best soldiers in all France. So much for Britanny ; I am passionately fond of Madame Descartes, who adores you ; when she was at Paris, you had not an opportunity of seeing enough of her ; she told me she wrote to you with that respect she thought due to her uncle, *blue* was a colour, a thousand other things about your son ; is not this pretty ? she is to shew me your answer. This is her manner of saying things off hand, which she practised the other day ; tell me what you think of it ; as to me, I am very much pleased with it ; for though natural it is uncommon.

Your Marquis is perfectly amiable, quite taken up with his duty ; in a word, he is a man. I find his reputation is quite established here, which surprises me ; in a word, *God preserve him*, you cannot doubt of my manner of expression. How pleasant you are at the notion that Madame de Rochebonne cannot always remain in her present state, unless *lapidated* ! what a pretty whim ! I am perfectly of this opinion, and that it was thus Deucalion and Pyrrha* so well restored the universe ; these would do just as much in case of necessity : this conceit is somewhat too pleasant.

* See the rondeau of Benserade upon Deucalion and Pyrrha.

LETTERS OF THE
LETTER DCXCI.

To the Same.

Rennes, Wednesday May 18, 1689;

THANK God, my child, I find you have been blooded, for I acknowledge it has given me much satisfaction; I am very desirous to know whether your head has been relieved by it. Madame de Chaulnes, after having embraced the beautiful Countess, informs her she has some uneasiness in her legs, like herself, which does but ill agree with the gravity of the places in which God has put you both; and if you find yourself well from bleeding, she desires you will inform her; acquaint her then, my dearest girl, for I shall be very glad to find that my blood has not been unnecessarily spilt.

We have laughed heartily at the entreaty at the close of your letter, for me to take a purge, and I am just preparing myself to take the powder and the Capuchin's manna, but without any occasion, except the probable effects of Lent, and the length of time since I thought of taking physic. So, here I am purged, as you have been blooded; I find myself very well from it. I had a deal of company at night, M. and Madame de Chaulnes, Madame de Carman, M. de Rennes, M. de St. Malo, M. de Revel, Tonguedec, and several other illustrious gentlemen and ladies of Britanny. Methinks I see you when I look at Madame de Chaulnes, behaving miraculously to all, the proportions being justly observed; for every thing is measured, though natural and familiar. I dine in one camp, and sup in another; that is to say, in the morning with my dear hostess*, and at night at the hotel of de Chaulnes. The duke is constantly occupied, ever engaged in dispatching troops, and lodging them; in incessant reviews with drums beating, whilst the regiments and troops are always in motion; and he entertains the officers at two tables, the one consisting of eighteen, and the other of ten covers. Every thing is splendid, as the Chevalier says, *and every thing goes like a ferry-boat with the cable cut.* Madame de Chaulnes thanked

me

* Madame de Marbeuf.

me for this comparison, and said to me in a whisper, If I had children I w ould not act in this manner. We shall go on Monday to the Rocks, to repose ourselves a little ; my son is quite impatient to be there, and it will do his wife good ; and I myself breathe nothing but the air of the woods of the Rocks. We shall say that our return will be speedy ; God guide our thoughts and designs. I have just been reading a pretty letter that Mademoiselle Descartes wrote to me ; let Paulina answer it, in doing honour to M. Descartes and religion ; as a miracle is absolutely necessary, it is easy to place it according to the occasion you have for it. I sometimes laugh at my friendship for Mademoiselle Descartes, I have a natural disposition towards her, I have always some business with her, methinks she is somewhat related to you on her father M. Descartes's side * ; and thence perhaps I borrow a little bit from my dear daughter. Adieu, most amiable woman, take care of yourself, and remember that I am in perfect health. Paulina's writing is become vastly pretty, without your aid she would have wrote but an indifferent scrawl ; this will not be the only good you will do her. I am very sorry to think, I did not attend the Chevalier in his last illness ; it seems to me, that he is going to follow your counsel and that of M. de Louvois ; he is preparing for the waters, and he will do well. Our Marquis is always too amiable.

M. de Lavardin †, is set out from Rouen to return ; you will have Avignon a long while.

LETTER DCXII.

To the Same.

Rennes, Wednesday May 25, 1689.

I AM just going to set out with my son and his wife for the Rocks. The Duke de Chaulnes is gone to make the tour of Lower Britanny ; and Madame de Chaulnes

* It is known that Madame de Grignan used to call Descartes her father.

† He was ambassador extraordinary at Rome, from whence he was recalled, after having received many insults from Pope Innocent XI. with regard to the franchises, and other complaints of the court of France against that of Rome.

Chaulnes will set forward in an hour's time to go and wait for him at St. Malo's: they were not willing that we should depart sooner. We have remained a fortnight through mere complaisance: for my part, I am so overwhelmed with visits and compliments, that I can really hold it out no longer. I absolutely require rest and quietness in those desirable woods of the Rocks; I shall be there to-night, and shall profit of the opportunity; for I am ever thinking how to please you. We all supped last night at M. de Rennes's; these are perfect festivals; this is the land of good cheer; the meat is fine and well larded, and the butter is excellent. M. and Madame de Chaulnes would each have wrote to you, had they not been so very much hurried. Madame de Chaulnes said to me with tears in her eyes, almost choaked; "Acquaint, at least, the beautiful Countess, that I left you in good health." She is, indeed, a most amiable friend, who acquires herself miraculously well in all the parts Providence allots her. I have now been with her six weeks, and, during that time, her thoughts have been solely employed to take care of me, make the most of me, and to give marks of her friendship without any constraint. Madame de Carman is set out for Lower Normandy, she is endued with some of the most amiable qualities in the world, and you would love her if you knew her. Madame de Marbeuf is sorry I should leave her, although I am part of the day upon her hands; yet she will not give me up, though she is acquainted with the necessity of my going to the Rocks. I will acquaint you when I go to Nantes, and my son is at the head of his nobility. My whole attention is engaged to secure the remittance of some bills of exchange to *Beaulieu*, which cannot fail satisfying the most griping of them all; I am just like a ship that wants to be careened. You desire me, my dear child, to acquaint you with my affairs; this is my present situation, and these my designs, I have not yet done any thing; I shall concert my measures with the *Abbe Charier* in regard to Nantes.

The Chevalier will regulate all your most material business, before he sets out. I participate with you the joy

joy you will have at seeing him, and the benefit he will receive from the waters of Balaruc. M. de Grignan will return triumphant, and will not deserve to be thrown over those shattered balustrades, which have made such convenient breaches for the execution of your design. But will you ever be the dupe to this expense? consider the north-wind has often served you the same trick. You terrified me, for I thought it had carried away all the trees, and consequently all the nightingales; but it is with pleasure I find there are enough remaining to make them sing, and to make you sensible of the spring and its rising verdure; you have also gentle showers, which make you recall to mind our poor Livri. Your couplet is very pretty, the air which Arcabonne* has given us, is a valuable acquisition, it is played with such ease and success as are sure to please; I sing yours, but it is to myself. Your brother is quite dissipated, I can scarce speak or present your love to him; he will be more tractable at the Rocks. Madame de la Fayette informs me, that she has seen M. d'Aix, who cannot be silent with regard to your merit; she thinks you are the true line of this prelate with all the Grignans. Adieu, my dear girl, I must go and enter into our woods by the gate of Vitre; there are ten alleys that you know nothing of, and my son is to surprise me with a parterre, and two new squares. We must quit this solitude to go to Nantes, this is a melancholy necessity.

The news from Brest is as follows. M. de Chateaurenau has safely landed his troops, arms, and money in Ireland. My Lord Herbert attacked M. de Gabaret, who was off at sea with part of our fleet. M. de Chateaurenau after having covered the convoy, for which he was appointed, came to the assistance of M. de Gabaret; the fight lasted seven hours; when the English sheered off much disabled and shattered into their ports. The French pursued them; and in their return they fell in with seven Dutch merchantmen, which they have brought into Brest; this capture is estimated at a million of crowns.

* See the monologue of Arcabonne in *Amadis de Gaules* Act II. Scene I. At that time an infinite number of parodies were made upon it.

LETTERS OF THE
LETTER DCXCIII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday June 1, 1689.

PAULINA is too happy in being your secretary; she learns, as I told you, to think, and turn her thoughts, by seeing how you turn yours; she is learning the French language, which most women are ignorant of, but you take the trouble of explaining words to her, which she would not understand; and by instructing her upon so many subjects, you are so lucky as to ease both her head and mine; the tediousness of dictating, is not equal to the constraint of writing; and my mind is never at rest, but when I know you are so. Persevere, then, in instructing so properly your daughter, and which affords both you and me so much satisfaction.

When you are assured of my being in a perfect state of health, you do every thing that can be done, which is to dread its interruption. This sometimes engages my thoughts, and not finding any of those little inconveniences with which you are acquainted, I say with astonishment, we must, nevertheless, wait for the change of so happy a state; and hereupon I conclude, that we should, as upon all other occasions, submit to God's will; and believe, that in inflicting ills upon me, he will give me patience, and I will enjoy my present lot.

The Coadjutor* has had the colick, he has voided two more stones, I write *bagatelles* to him, I tell him I do not lend him my apartment to lie in; that he should be very well contented with the two painful children he brought forth last year; to which I was both witness and godmother; and ask what he intends doing with this cruel fruitfulness, which will perhaps strangle its father, if it be not mollified and managed. I heartily pity the Chevalier, and am charmed he is convinced of the care I would have taken of him in his illness. I do not understand how

any

* The Archbishop of Arles, whom she still calls through habit, the Coadjutor, as he was so styled during the life of M. d'Arles, his uncle.

any one can hesitate in giving the preference to the waters of Balaruc ; I was present when he was advised to go thither, after its virtues had been set forth ; this must be determined upon. From thence, my dear child, he will pay you a visit, and this will be a great happiness for you and all his family ; you will have many things to talk of, various subjects to discuss.

The comparative vision of the north wind to the chattering of the ladies of Aix, appears to me very pleasant. I know how attentive you are to this sort of company ; and I believe you are still more so to the wind ; and it may judge from your manner of speaking of it, you wish more ardently for its termination than that of the court of your ladies. You may be certain, that your extraordinary terror, arises from the unexpected fall of the tower ; it was not placed there for nothing, it was placed in front, and doubtless broke the first impetuosity of the storm. You are uncovered, and I am greatly in pain for you ; and, in truth, M. d' Arles might very well have dispensed with pulling down the towers of his forefathers. I did not know that he had found Versailles so agreeable ; you acquaint me with a thousand things I was ignorant of before. He will then have the honour of the bill of review. Rochon is returned, this is lucky. Madame de Buri's judgment with regard to the business of the grand council was not amiss ; she thought to cast us into half yearly labyrinths, from whence we could never emerge ; this was an excellent entrenchment for the quintessence of chicanery ; we were advertised of it miraculously, every thing has taken a happy turn in this affair. Apropos of labyrinths, that of the Rocks is very pretty, their walks are very agreeable ; my son is mad enough to wish for M. de Grignan here, and to think he would not be tired. We are reading the *Variations* by M. de Meaux ; this is a charming book in my opinion. The time flies as swift as lightning, though without amusement ; and it even glides with chagrin. It has not rained these six weeks, and has been intensely hot ; now on a sudden it has turned very cold, though there has been no rain, and we have got a fire. I told you

that all the nobility of this canton, to the number of five or six hundred, had chosen your brother for their chief, this is considered as a very great honour done him; but it will occasion a ridiculous expence. He has not yet received any orders for setting out; we wish that such an unnecessary encampment may not take place.

LETTER DCXCIV.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday June 5, 1689.

I RECEIVED both your letters at once; I am very glad I had got the better of my uneasiness. Martillac assures me you are in perfect health; and that never were remedies more timely administered; they have at length cured you of your disorders; this alone was sufficient to make them come into esteem. I have lost sight of the uneasiness which the Duchess de Chaulnes felt in these handsome legs; she writes to me often, and talks no more about it. As to me, my dear child, I have acquainted you with the good state of my health; this medicine did me then neither good nor harm; I am not troubled with vapours, nor do I take the essence of Jacob; for there is no need for physic when we are well; I have no tremors at night, and my hands are very cool; in a word, I cannot help thinking you are guilty of ingratitude, to be so much concerned at my health, and not to thank God, but imagine I deceive you, when I tell you the real truth. I am astonished at the situation I am in, and after your example I am anticipating ills; I think that it is not possible for this state to continue long, and that we should wait for the usual inconveniencies attendant on human nature; God is the master, and I submit to his will. He commands the knight to seek for relief at Balaruc, and I am convinced he cannot take a more eligible step; you will be very glad to see him at Grignan, and this pause will do him as much good as the waters; this will form a good and agreeable company; when it shall please Providence to send you your mother and son, I shall consider it as a peculiar grace, and return my thanks accordingly. I cannot help thinking it pleasant that Madame

dame de Bagnols, who left this youth a child, should find him a soldier, quite habituated to the calling, deliberate and intrepid, whilst he throws his arms round her neck to embrace her ; now he is perfect, he was wanting in nothing but this degree of ease and familiarity ; he was timid, but he is no longer so ; how amiable he is, and what a good course he takes ! *God preserve him*, for here we must always recur. Madame de la Fayette will write to M. de Boufflers ; your son meets with nothing but friends, on every side ; they were at first yours, and now they are his. I learn that the Chevalier is to set out to-day, which greatly pleases me.

I ask pardon of God ; but M. de Lavardin's return gives me great joy, I can comprehend all the pleasure that Avignon gives you ; Providence alone could afford you this succour. I am entirely taken up with you and your affairs ; I do not forget my own, or to give the necessary orders ; my chief object at present is being here and remitting some money ; but it is very difficult to finger it in this country ; the troops ruin every thing. All possible precautions are taken, as if the P. of O. thought of nothing but us ; and probably his designs will be confined to the desolation of this province. My son is still with me ; we tremble lest he should be obliged to obey M. de Chaulnes's orders, and repair immediately to head the nobility ; this is called being colonel of a *regiment of nobility* ; it includes both that of Rennes and Vitre, making in the whole five or six hundred gentlemen. Our soldiers now begin to perform their exercise with a tolerable grace, and will soon become like the others ; the first lessons of every thing appear ridiculous ; I assure you there are some at Vitre that have a very good air.

Do not, my dear, believe that by lodging at Madame de Marbeuf's, I had any sort of misunderstanding with M. and Madame de Chaulnes ; I mentioned it to them, and they were very well pleased at it ; besides, as Madame de Carman was with them, I should not then have had a moment's rest in that apartment. I was amazingly well accommodated at the good Marchioness's ;

chioness's ; and I succeeded so far, that I brought about an accommodation between her and the Duke and Dutches, so that through their regard for me, they have forgot all that is past, and they invited her to dinner. Her crime was, having received M. Pontchartrain at her house, having there given him a magnificent supper, and saying, that he was considered as the Saviour and restorer of the province. You may guess the effects of such a discourse : she denies it, and no more is said about it ; I am sorry Paulina's cold prevents her writing for you ; I am now accustomed to her writing, and think that she eases you. I have not afflicted you with Mademoiselle Descartes's letter, she wanted to send it to you. The reply you will make, will, no doubt, be clever and pertinent ; it is a pretty question to discuss, and you will give it a superficial air, that will easily bring you off.

If Madame du Bois de la Roche's brother had joined to his Parisian dialect, his sister's horse-laugh, it would have been impossible for you to have resisted. Larrei will be with you, he is, I believe, a son of the late M. Lenet, who was attached to the late prince, and was very witty ; I was very young, when I used to laugh with him. You tell me wonders, in speaking of the haughtiness and confidence of youth ; it is true that we depend only in God and his sword ; there is nothing impossible, every thing yields, is flexible, and easy. In another character, with much less beauty, I have been sensible of this situation and its prosperities ; but, as you say, there comes a time, when we must change our style. We find that we stand in need of all the world, a law-suit requires solicitation ; we must familiarize ourselves, we must live with the living ; we must confine our sense on one side, to give it vent on the other : for my part, I find that the notion you have of the state of affairs, is a kind of intelligence far beyond my capacity, and I admire it.

It is dismal weather, it rains, the wind blows, and it is very cold ; send us some of your heat, some of your fun : we thank you for your north wind, he is too sensible a companion.

L E T

LETTER DCXCV.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday June 8, 1689.

THE resolution you have taken of going to your estate in Avignon, is very eligible; it is but just that people who so heartily give you, what they gave to the Vice-Legate, should have the satisfaction of seeing you: a more convenient time could not be hit upon; after this you will be at liberty, and you will have no occasion to quit your castle, but when it is agreeable to you. By the time you receive this letter, you will have a tolerable good set; is it possible that the Chevalier may be with you? how happy will you both be! When is my turn to come?

To dismiss the chapter of health, I assure you that the physic I took, was only to chime in with those authors, who say we should from time to time take a cathartic; and I am absolutely so well that it terrifies me; it is not really natural, to be released from the complaints that used to trouble me; I know not what Providence is preparing for me; in the mean while I housewife my health; I eat moderately, nor have I any great inclination to be in the mildew, or look at the moon; I begin to correct myself of these follies, and I think it pleasant that even at Livri I was still as full of them, as when I was twenty, but this is not the case now. After taking a dose of reading and conversation, we separate; I take a solitary walk in the woods, and I read over your agreeable letters, with a mixture of pleasure and displeasure. The Chevalier makes me very uneasy about M. de la Trousse's situation, I beg you will acquaint me with what you know about it. I believe, my dear child, that this letter will find you all met at Grignan, and that you have not left Paulina at Aubenas; I should be very happy to influence you in her favour, and to know how she stands with you; I assure you that gentleness and reason will have the greatest influence over her; and indeed what other means can prevail over a person of sense, and who endeavours only to correct herself and please you? Our

son is still with us, we fear the dreadful mandate to repair into Lower Britanny, and there only be at expence without any other advantage, than that of being deprived of the company of our indefatigable lecturer; this enrages us.

Here is a memorial which Madame de Marbeuf desires me instantly to send to you, to know if it be true that the son of M. de M. is so rich and so well settled; as to me, I am a witness of the magnificence of his castle, goods, and plate; she wants to know the grandeur of his house, I say that it is very large, by this I mean his castle; we must pass over this part as well as we can, and dwell upon the rest, which is very good. I should be very happy to serve this worthy honest man, who seems to be among the number of your friends. He appears inclined to emigrate, and marry his son in our Britanny. I shall do my best to bring it about, as will likewise my son, as soon as you have answered this memorial, and I think it will be agreeable to you. This is enough for to-day, my dear Countess, you are in too good company to write or read such long letters.

LETTER DCXCVI.

Monsieur de Sevigne.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday June 12, 1689.

I WOULD rather have been the author of your letter to Mademoiselle Descartes, than of an epic poem, or half the works of her uncle; I am enchanted at it, and never did Rohault*, whom you quote, speak so clearly upon any subject. With regard to myself, I can assure you, that if the Inquisitor of Avignon will give you leave, after you have explained to him your doctrine, I will hold it orthodox, and for the only reason that can be given in a mystery of faith; do not, however, think that this letter which I so heartily praise, and which I even admire, is entirely faultless; it is one that I have had a good deal of trouble to correct. I mean the writing, which is as difficult to decypher,

* A celebrated Cartesian Philosopher.

as the subject upon which you reason is to comprehend ; in fact, it is not writing, but figures, some of one shape, some of another ; they are large variegated hieroglyphics, which cannot fail to please the sight, when they are no longer intelligible to the understanding. My mother is perfectly well, therefore make yourself easy upon this head, she leads so very gentle a life, that it is upon this account almost irksome ; but this we must not think of. I embrace you a thousand times, my dear little sister, do as much for me to your illustrious spouse, and transfuse my sincere affection to Paulina,

LETTER DCXCVII.

Madame de Sevigne.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday June 12, 1689.

MY son is charmed with your letter ; and do you know that I share in the admiration ? I understand it, I assure you I understand it, and that I don't imagine any thing more to the purpose could have been said upon the dreadful subject. I could not for a long while get the better of my ignorance, in supposing that a miracle was absolutely necessary, to explain the mystery according to Aristotle's philosophy ; if he requires one, Descartes is in the same predicament, and there is more sense in what he says, till we come to that part which destroys it all. That good girl, Mademoiselle Descartes, will be charmed, she will say nothing I promise you, she will admire you only with a very amiable Cartesian, a friend of my son, who is truly worthy of being admitted into this confidence. Make yourself easy, my dear child, this letter will do you great honour, without giving you any uneasiness. We are here in a state of tranquility, peace, and silence, quite opposite to that of your residence at Avignon ; you are probably still there. It is a handsome city, it is methinks quite brilliant ; you must have been received there with acclamations of joy ; I have always hitherto accompanied you upon this festival ; for you have been there in such a manner as to render it a perpetual festival. I shall be very glad when your first letter from Avignon

comes to hand ; methinks your complaisance for M. de Grignan is very becoming ; when he is in the right you shall not make him uneasy ; you have taken all your measures properly. I greatly pity M. de la Trousse, I am told he lays aside every thing to think of his health ; he is going to Bourbon, this is very far from Barege, whither he was destined. We are in grievous expectation of having poor Sevigne snatched from us, to go and take the command of this regiment of nobility, for there is no talk of the *arriere-ban*. M. and Madame de Chaulnes are at Rennes, they are going very soon to St. Malo's, we shall pay them a visit upon their return. M. de Chaulnes the other day concluded a marriage which gave me pleasure, between the little du Guesclin, and a very pretty girl with a fortune ; when he had with much trouble stipulated all the articles, he said, now sign the contract, the parties consented, and he immediately resumed, saying, what prevents their being married to-morrow ? Every one cried out, there must be cloaths, a toilet and linen ? he laughed at these wishes. M. de Rennes gave a dispensation of two banns, and the next day being Sunday, one was published in the morning, and they were married at noon ; after dinner, the little bride danced like an angel ; she has learned of a master at Paris, and caught the duchess's air ; the next day she was Madame du Guesclin, and had saved 20,000 livres that would have been otherwise spent in the wedding. This is meant as a lesson for M. de Grignan, when he is disposed to make a match in his government ; both families were charmed with this saying. This marriage will not please you, but as I was present, I will give my daughter a detail of it one of these days ; it is consistent with good sense to get the better sometimes of trifles and customs. Adieu, my most amiable girl, I walk every day with you, though you do not see me ; this is occasioned by the constant bustle of Avignon.

LETTER DCXCVIH.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday June 15. 1689.

WHAT a difference, my dear countess, there is between the grand, brilliant, and dissipated life you lead at Avignon, and ours here, plain, simple, and solitary! this is agreeable to the order of things, and the order of God; and however you may be tinctured with the disposition of an anchorit, those honours and sincere respects, from persons of merit and quality, cannot methinks displease you; I should even have some difficulty to believe it, were you to say so; in truth, it is not in nature not to like sometimes being placed above the rest of the world. When I read in the life of the old duke d'Epernon, of the grief he felt at being compelled to leave his fine government of Provence, *all those beautiful cities*, says the historian, *so great and considerable*; how much M. de Guise thought himself thereby honoured and gratified; what a sure mark this was of a sincere peace with the King; what joy he felt at being beloved and honoured there; I imagine that God having given us the same place, with all the accommodations, distinctions, and marks of confidence, which you now enjoy, it cannot reasonably and sincerely be stiled, the most ridiculous and disagreeable thing in the world. I fancy that nothing can give you chagrin, but domestic affairs and violent dissipations; for in other respects, if such a place can be preserved for our pretty little captain, I can assure you it will be very clever. I know your expences are so very great, that if I were to continue for any length of time, I should say to you as I did to Madame de Chaulnes, you seem to me *in a ferry boat, with the cable broke*. But they are at an end, you are now in your castle, where, though you have not much time to yourself, you will not be in such a violent whirlwind; it could not be borne in the long run, rest is necessary at all events: nevertheless if the expence could not be ascertained in that agreeable city, and you were to pass a winter in Provence, it

would be very sweet to be under so fine a sun. M. de Caderousse has furnished a sufficient panegyric upon it, by its recalling him back to life. Madame de Castries's daughter is quite handsome, and Madame de _____ is very amiable, and sings like an angel; M. de Grignan must be in love with her. *Bassette* terrifies me, it is a treacherous and enticing game, a hundred pistoles are soon lost at it, and your journey must cost you enough without this addition. But mind, I beg of you, the rage of never ceasing to talk of Avignon or your greatness.

My son is going to Rennes to receive M. de Chaulnes's orders, to collect and put in motion those *noble* regiments. He will afterwards return, and spend some days with us; and then, without any danger, he will keep a great table about a dozen or fifteen leagues from hence —this is the misfortune. M. and Madame de Chaulnes are going to St Malo's. Corbinelli made me laugh with the reasons he has given you for not having written; an extreme desire of writing to you, added to a thousand opportunities, and a thorough persuasion of its being his duty; you must be very difficult, if you do not yield to such good reasons. He informs me that M. de Soissons* attacks M. de Descartes very vigorously, merely in hopes of pleasing M. de Montausier; for it is said he does not understand what he endeavours to disprove. Mademoiselle Descartes considers it as a great insult, after the infinite compliments she received from him at Paris, upon the eloquence due to her uncle and the immortality of his name; there are some people who will answer him. How, says Corbinelli, a man to attack the Prince's judgment, and that of Madame de Grignan and M. de Vardes!

I embrace my dear lady, you have been greatly agitated, repose yourself, I entreat you: as to me, I am so regular, and in such perfect health, that I cannot comprehend what God intends to do with me, I read *the treatise upon submission to his will* †, which is always new

* Peter-Daniel Huet, Bishop of Soissons, afterwards Bishop of Avranches, was one of the most learned men of his time, and possessed an extensive genius. The Duke de Montausier, governor to Lewis, Dauphin of France, son of Lewis XIV. made choice of him as preceptor to that Prince.

† This is the second Treatise of Vol. I. of Moral Essays.

new to me. How happy it is to be fond of reading ! I have written to the Marquis ; every possible encomium is paid to this little gentleman. Remember me in the most friendly manner to all about you. Are you then, Chevalier, not fatigued after the journey ?

LETTER DCXCIX.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday June 19, 1689.

I AM passionately fond of your letters from Avignon. I read them over and over ; they enliven my imagination and the silence of our woods. Methinks I am ere with you, I share your triumph, I converse with you, and entertain your company, and I honour their nobility and merit ; in a word, I enjoy your beautiful sun, and the charming banks of your beautiful river Rhone, and the softness of your air ; but I do not play at bassette, because I am afraid. I nevertheless comprehend that a life of such continual motion may fatigue you ; and I am greatly terrified lest your want of rest should cause you any illness. You must have arrived at Grignan, according to my computation, a day sooner than the Chevalier, who was at Lyons the 11th, and set out from thence on Sunday the 12th, so that you must have been there on Monday, and he on Tuesday—no, you arrived both in the same day—tell me if I have guessed right.

Madame de Vins has given my compliments to M. de Pomponne with respect to her son's regiment, and M. de Pomponne has written me a very agreeable letter, so that it is he who has written to me concerning the pleasure I should have with respect to this regiment. My son has just set out for Rennes, he will return to-morrow ; but in a week's time he will go to settle there with all this nobility, and teach them to form into squadrons and accustom them to a warlike air ; he is quite disconsolate at being obliged thus to return to a profession, which he had so sincerely quitted ; he will keep a table like a Bedl mite ; this is the *tu autum* and *cui bono* ; in fine, it is God's will. We shall be alone, but the fine weather will come to our assistance, with good books, work, and fine walks. Do not amuse yourself, my girl,

girl, in answering my old letters, I do not recollect them; talk to me of yourself, and all that is at Grignan. I wish the Chevalier a good state of health, and that he may find some consolation for his misfortunes, in the sweetness of your agreeable society and all his family; tell me his sentiments of the buildings, and if that of the Carcassonne always remains with its arms across. I embrace the Count, Paulina, and all those willing to hear from me.

LETTER DCC.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday June 22, 1689.

WHAT a fine procession*! how holy! how magnificent! how suitable are the demonstrations of respect! how well adapted are all the external parts, in comparison of your prophanations at Aix †, with that *Prince of Love* ‡, and those *paper horses* ||. What a difference! I am struck with the beauty of this perambulation, blended with soft and military music! Those perfumes cast forth so opportunely, that manner of saluting you so handsomely and respectfully: M. de Grignan's good mien, which fits so well upon these occasions; in a word, every thing in this ceremony affects and pleases me. This is just the place for the blue ribbons; and this kind of ornament is just intended for people of M. de Grignan's birth and dignity; and you make use of a very proper sentence, in saying, that the ostentation of modern people does not offend the pride of others; because it is neither ostentation nor pride, and justice is done to real merit. I acknowledge, my dear child, that in the midst of all this clamour, the communion surprised me; it is so short a time since

Whit-

* The procession at Avignon on God's festival.

† The indecency of the procession exhibited at Aix the same day, is carried to extravagance. This procession was instituted by Rene d'Anjou, King of Naples and Sicily, Count of Provence, and who regulated the cavalcade and ceremony. A satire upon this subject may be seen, in a little Latin work, under the title of *Querela ad Gassendum*.

‡ The prince of Love has for several years been omitted.

|| There are men in the procession, who dance about on pasteboard horses, which appear like a new species of Centaurs.

Whitsuntide, that probably from the station you hold these demonstrations are necessary; for upon any other consideration, I would not have you more pious than St. Lewis, who communed only five times a year. La Chaise* was asked, with some asperity, where he met with this; he shewed me a manuscript of one of the Almoners of that King, which is in his Majesty's library. In a word, my girl, you know your religion and duty better than any one, and this is a great science. You are now at Grignan, I hope you will sleep better there than at Avignon, where you could not find time for repose. I am indeed afraid of your being sick. I am very desirous of knowing, when the Chevalier is to set out for Balaruc. M. d'Arles designs going to Forges; does he still persevere in obtaining his bill of review? M. Baron, one of your judges, is dead; this is one of your reasons for not letting this bill of review languish; it is true that death deals about his scythe so promiscuously, that there is no building upon any thing. You said very well, shall we never lay aside the custom of being attached to these shocking mortals? how imprudent it is! and yet by what chains are we not riveted? You have made me laugh, in talking to me in a style I am acquainted with, about following Madame Cornuel step by step, for I see and understand you; if health can furnish such hopes, I may be possessed of them; but God knows if I desire any thing more than his will; the futility of wishes should always recall us to this submission. I lead the easy tranquil life you know, without restraint, in good company, and then, by turns, walking and reading engages me; so that your time at Avignon is passed in a very different manner, but agreeable to the difference of our destinies. My son will set out on Sunday for Rennes, where he is to keep a good table, and in this, perhaps, will be comprised all hostilities. M. and Madame de Chaulnes are at Sr. Malo's, they are very much disposed to see me. It seems we are not so much terrified as we were at the P. of O. and perhaps those regiments of nobility, for we must speak with propriety, will not march beyond Rennes; so that

all

* John Filleau de la Chaise, author of a life of St. Lewis, much esteemed.

all the blows will fall upon your poor brother. I tenderly embrace my dearest Countess, and think I am saying a great many things to the Chevalier. What is he at Grignan ! what is he not in that little room ! what does he see you, is he conversing with you ! how happy, methinks he is, notwithstanding his misfortunes ! I had wrote to Mademoiselle de Meri upon her brother's illness * ; she informs me that since the arrival of the brother *de la Charite*, he is much better ; that his spirits flow, and he has recovered his feeling in his thighs and legs, and that he is coming to Paris in a litter.

Mademoiselle Descartes is charmed with the elegance and goodness of your mind ; she thinks all Britanny unworthy of seeing your letter, except one very amiable man, whom she calls her master, and who admires you beyond any thing he ever before admired. It is true that your letter is a perfect piece, and written with an air that does not favour of the dust of philosophy.

LETTER DCCI.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday June 26, 1689.

AT length, my dear girl, you have left your charming Avignon ; if this residence has not tired you more than the account you have given me of it, occasioned grief in me, you will retain a very agreeable idea of it, and a great desire of returning thither. All your descriptions have diverted us to the last degree ; particularly that of your brother, who was formerly charmed, like you, with the beauty of the situation, the gentleness of the air, the coolness arising from those two fine rivers † : but what you observed with greater attention than him, was the noble antiquity of the churches, honoured, as you say, with the presence and residence of so many Popes ; the beauty of the chapter, which represents so many Cardinals, by the magnificence

* The Marquis of Trouffie.

† The Rhone, and the Durance which empties itself into the Rhone, about a league below Avignon.

cence of the dresses * ; this is so great a curiosity that nothing can come up to it in France. As to the Penitents I am acquainted with this masquerade, which cannot help being agreeable : but you triumph in speaking of the Jews † ; I feel some pity towards them, and I pray like the Church, that God may remove the veil that prevents their seeing Jesus Christ is come ; since they have not been persuaded of this truth by the Queen and Madame de Bethune, they should not be so by you. What a miserable and ridiculous representation of that precious arch, of those very respectable laws ! but whence arises that odour which confounds all the perfumes ? it is doubtless that nauseous odour of incredulity and ingratitude, for virtues are ever well flavoured. That hatred which we bear them is an extraordinary thing. *Esther* has nevertheless revived an agreeable idea of the young Jewesses ; our Christians would not have viewed them with horror. In fine, I find myself much disposed to talk to you very fruitlessly about all you have related, and probably it may prove very tedious to you ; but I yield to the pleasure of reviewing such ideas, as pay you a kind of acknowledgment for the friendship, which has obliged you to make me acquainted therewith. But can you never make another journey to Avignon, without being in that horrid agitation ? can you not enjoy the repose to be met with in that fine climate, and the society of rational beings who inhabit it ? can you not sleep a little better ? I really mean, *sleep*, for you had no time for it. Must you always be engaged with that destructive Baffette ? If a general revolution were to take place in these things, it would be a charming transaction, and the Chevalier himself would find he were much better for it : for the air at Grignan is very different from that of Avignon ; you have stolen all hearts, which I have no difficulty to believe. As to my part, my dear, I have no longer any thoughts about a journey to Nantes ; I am persecuting people there who are in my debt, I am but little disposed for such a proceeding ; I have a long account

* The choir habits of the Canons of the metropolis of Avignon are red, like those of the Cardinals.

† This relates to the Jewish festival at Avignon.

account to settle with the new farmer, and in this respect the Abbe Charier will be very useful to me ; I return you a thousand thanks for all that your goodness has dictated to him on the score of your affection to me. You plainly see, my dearest girl, that what I say of *myself* is as tiresome as the recital you give of *yourself* is for some time diverting. My son went yesterday to Rennes, to join his Nobleffe ; but when he is here, he never sees any other passages of your letters but such as I shew him—such is the footing ; so that you may impart to me some account of your expences and losses at Avignon ; tell me if Mademoiselle de Grignan is to remain any time at Gif, and whether the Coadjutor will have the honour of the bill of review. I informed him that Madame de la Faluere is at Paris, it is for him to govern her, and prevent her serving her foolish friend. All that interests you is so dear to me, and I am so taken up with it, that I think of nothing else but merely superficially ; but I am, nevertheless, perfectly obedient to the commands of Providence, without whose aid, I reckon upon nothing. Adieu, my dear girl, who are the most worthy of mortals to be beloved. I embrace M. de Grignan, the Chevalier, and Paulina. My daughter-in-law gives her compliments to you, she takes great care of me without constraint, allowing me constantly *bold liberty*. Here is a billet from Madame de la Fayette, you will see what Boufflers says of our child ; I am persuaded that Barbentane will never throw the box at her head, in playing at backgammon, as he did at the P. of E.—'s, who returned the compliment with a candlestick : then swords were drawn, much disorder ensued, and the Chevalier de Vasse was killed in parting them.

LETTER DCCII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday June 29, 1689.

I CANNOT tell you how much I pity the Chevalier, there are few examples of such misfortunes ; his health has been in such a desperate state for some time, that he can neither reckon upon past disorders, regimen, nor season. I am sensible of this situation with

with regard to him, and with regard to your son, who will be an infinite loser ; we may see all this with a single glance, the detail would importune his modesty : I am persuaded of these truths, and I always look towards God, who will restore to this Marquis *, a M de Montegut, wisdom itself ; and all the others of this regiment, who, to please the Chevalier, do wonders for this little captain. Is it not a kind of consolation not to be found in other regiments less attached to the colonel ? This Marquis has written me so tender a letter, that I have been heartily affected at it ; he cannot discontinue his praises of M. de Montegut ; he rallies and pays me some compliments upon the fine piece I wrote on M. d'Ailes ; you are very pleasant to have sent it to him. He says he has reassumed poetry, that they have scarce time to breathe, ever on the wing, and never two days at rest ; they have to deal with a very vigilant man. Tell me, I beg, some news of the Chevalier ; I have some hopes in the change of climate, the virtues of the waters, and still more in the consoling sweetness to be with you and his family. I believe him to be a benign flood, with more justice than you think of me ; methinks he will order and regulate every thing properly. It is true that the county of Avignon was an act of Providence, not easily guessed at ; but let us turn aside our disagreeable thoughts, you are but too full of them, without my letters being able to divert you from them. You must preserve your health, the failure of which would be a still greater evil ; mine is always perfectly good. This purgation of the Capuchins, in which there is no senna, seems to me like a glass of lemonade, and so it is in fact ; I took it, to think no more about it ; as it was a long time since I was purged, I did not feel it. You do this remedy too much honour, my son does not keep at home in the mornings for it ; this is a nostrum to remove what is superfluous, very superfluous, which does not make you look for mid-day at four o'clock, nor awake all the cats that sleep. We lead such a regular life, that it is scarce possible to be out of order.

We

* Lewis Francis, Marquis, afterwards Duke of Boufflers, Peer and Marshal of France.

We rise at eight, and I often walk till nine, when Mass begins, to breathe the fresh air in the woods: after Mass we dress, and we wish each other good morrow, and then we return and gather orange flowers; we then dine, and work or read till five. Since my son's absence, I read to save his little wife's lungs; I leave her at five, and retire to those agreeable alleys, with a footman who follows me: I have books with me, I change my route, and vary the turn of my walks; from a book of devotion, I take a history, this creates a diversion; makes one think a little of God and Providence, possess one's soul, and reflect on futurity; at length, about eight I hear the bell, this is the summons to supper; I am sometimes pretty distant, I join the Marchioness in her handsome parterre, and we form a company; we sup by twilight; I return with her to the Place Coulanges, in the midst of those orange trees; I view with an eye of jealousy, *the dreadful sanctity* through the handsome iron gate, which you are unacquainted with, I would willingly be there, but there is now no farther occasion for it. I prefer this life greatly to that of Rennes; is not this solitude very proper for a person who should think of herself, and who either is, or would be a Christian? In fine, my dearest girl, there is nothing but you that I prefer to the melancholy, tranquil retreat, I here enjoy; for I acknowledge, with too sensible a pleasure, that I would, if God were willing, pass some more time with you. I must be perfectly convinced of your friendship, to have given so much latitude to my pen in the recital of so melancholy a life. I have sent a scrap of your letter to my son, it belonged to him: *when it is for Jupiter we change*, this passage is very pretty, your mind here seems lively and at ease. Your courage, strength, and merit, are beyond every thing. Adieu, my dearest and most amiable girl; I hope you will tell me something about Paulina and the Chevalier. I embrace the Count, whom we but *too much love*.

Madame

Madame DE SEVIGNE (*daughter-in-law.*)

Truly, my dear sister, I know this very well, yes truly, *he is much beloved**. I dare not tell you that I am vastly fond of his son, this would cause me too much confusion; I only entreat him to call me no longer his aunt; I am *so little and so delicate*, that I can at most be only his cousin, Madame de Sevigne's health is not at all like mine, it is *strong and great*; I am so careful of her that I shall make you jealous: I must acknowledge to you, however, that this is without any constraint; I let her go into the woods alone, with no other company but books; she as naturally sinks into them as a weazel into a toad's mouth. As to me, though I have the same taste and liberty, I remain in the *parterre al' dispetto* of complaisance which we explode from the number of virtues, when we can give it the proper name, and it is not our choice. You charm me, my dear sister, in telling me that Madame de Sevigne loves me; I have taste sufficient to know the value of her friendship, and to love her in turn most heartily. We have shared in your triumph and your grandeur; but I would not have M. de Sevigne see them, this would give a distaste for a life of tranquillity, from whence he has been driven only by a provincial whirlwind, which will cost us five hundred pistoles; to give me some consolation, allow me to embrace you with all my heart; I dare not say M. de Grignan; for I have not entirely trampled upon honour.

Madame DE SEVIGNE *continues.*

I wanted to tell you, that I much approve of what my daughter-in-law has written to you. I have this moment received your letter of the eighteenth, which had remained at Vitre, though it, doubtless, arrived with that of the sixteenth. This letter informs me of the arrival of the Chevalier, with a bad countenance, not being able to support himself, and a disordered stomach;

* The supposed affection of Madame de Sevigne's daughter-in-law for M. de Grignan, whom she had never seen, gave rise to many jests as diverting as they were innocent.

mach ; and do you know what I did in reading this letter ? I wept as you all did ; I cannot support such a thought, and I take as sensible an interest in what concerns the Chevalier, as if I were really one of his family. I hope that the air and rest will make him better : your solicitude was always successful, and I heartily wish it may again ; of this I conjure you to assure him. Tell me in what chamber you have placed him, that I may visit him. How I pity Paulina and Madame de Rochebonne for having been at Aubenas, while you were at Avignon ! what a shocking difference ! unite your acknowledgments upon the victory of the Great Council ; indeed it is all owing to the Chevalier, and the respect that is paid to him and his friends ; you were too good in letting me have the happiness to perform a part. I wish the same success to M. d'Arles. I embracé and passionately love my dear Countess.

LETTER DCCIII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday July 3, 1689.

IT is nine months this day, reckoning day by day, and from Sunday to Sunday, since I left you with a deluge of tears, and more than you perceived at Charenton. Such partings are sensible and bitter, particularly when there is not much time to lose ; but in order to make good use of it, we should turn it into a period of abstinence and penance, this would be the sure means of not losing it, and would on the contrary be very useful ; it is certain that this holy œconomy is a favour from Heaven, like all others, and which we do not deserve to obtain. It is, then, nine months, since I have seen or embraced you, or even heard the sound of your voice ; I have not been ill, or had any particular uneasiness. I have seen fine houses, fine countries, and fine cities ; nevertheless, I must acknowledge, it appears to me nine years since I left you. I have not had any letter from you this post, this always gives me uneasiness. Madame de Lavardin tells me that she said to Madame de Buri with regard to Chabrilland's cause, which the last thinks to gain, " You must have great

great expectation ; but one of your friends, who is very skilful, is not of the same opinion." " Ah ! said she, that is M. de Fieubet, but I do not believe him." And afterward, Madame de Lavardin told me, it is M. d' Arles who will have the honour of drawing up the bill of review : he then is to be the solicitor ; but methinks I would not solicit with beat of drum in open court, where people are persuaded you have but too much credit. We lead here, my dear Countess, the life which I chalked out to you : it is very fine weather ; we are so perfumed at night with jessamines and orange-flowers, that in this respect I think I am in Provence. M. and Madame de Chaulnes have wrote to me from St. Malo, and incessantly speak of you. Write to la Troche, she cannot console herself on account of your forgetfulness ; I know not how it has happened, for you are punctual ; possibly I may not have informed you of the death of her husband ; wherefore I wait your answer.

LETTER DCCIV.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday July 6, 1689.

I RECEIVED those two agreeable packets, so essential to my repose, both together. You afflict me in giving me such an account of the Chevalier ; I never saw him troubled with such vapours, or so disordered a stomach. Were you not much affected to see him carried into those apartments ? you make the tears come into my eyes. This has long since been the subject of melancholy reflections to me. What a man ! at what an age ! in what a station ! what should it be ! what a reputation ! what a fortune strangled, suffocated ! what a loss for your son ! these are great subjects of meditation ; but to this we must add, it is God's will that it should be so ; there is nothing to be said to this, we must look down and suffer, we are not the strongest. You seem to be reconciled to the word *vapours*, which you would not utter till it was explained to you. You have relaxed in favour of the correspondence, which must entirely have been destroyed, if you had exploded this word ; it affords a resource for the explanation of things that are nameless ;

less ; it is suited to our ignorance, as a *Quinola a Prime*. Let us then treat the Chevalier's vapours in a proper manner ; say nothing to him that can displease him ; let there be no altercation, no dispute ; his blood is too easily agitated ; it catches fire, and circulates too violently ; this is the sole foundation of his disorders.

I am too much obliged to all your good company to think of and wish for me. I acknowledge, I often wish myself in that handsome large house, whose inhabitants I am so well acquainted with ; many compliments to the new-comer ; you have made me laugh at the equipage with which he came into your anti-chamber, flying from the north-wind, which seemed to pursue him. I imagine you only stand in need of this north-wind to complete the building ; what a convenience ! it will not fail you, when you stand in need : no less persuasions can prevail. Do not forget to tell me the sequel of every thing that occurs at Grignan ; this is the stage that attracts the most of my attention, though it be not the most important of any in Europe : but it is every thing to me. When I figure to myself the number of guests you have at Grignan ; that it may properly be called being in one's castle, to be relieved from other expences, I would force a laugh if I could ; and I say my daughter is carried away in a violent whirlwind, which she cannot avoid, and which every where pursues her as her destiny ; at the same time, I comprehend that God proportions your courage to the task, and your conduct is so wonderful, that you are always in the air, and yet you fly without wings ; as to me, my dear girl, I fall quite flat, and when I have nothing to support me, I am insupportable. My affairs at Nantes are in a lamentable situation ; every thing is turned to chicane and seizures, which are carried on for twenty years successively. The Abbe Charier offers me every day his care and services, and proposes to come fifty leagues from hence, to settle my accounts, if necessary : it is enough for me to tell you how much I ought to be obliged to him. The weather here is, as I have informed you, very delightful, the warmth is agreeable to the Rocks ; and I assure you, that the three hours I have been alone in these woods, with God, myself, you,

your

your letters, and my book, have appeared to me only a moment; there is something sweet and agreeable in this solitude, this profound silence, and this liberty; there is nothing I prefer to it greatly but yourself; such is my present situation. You say nothing to me about Paulina, and what the Chevalier thinks of her; answer me, is it Madame de Simianne de Vaureas, or the president's lady you have with you? Tell me all this of a breath, with the conduct and motions of M. d'Arles in the fourth court of inquests, without prejudice to what Rochon will tell me upon this head; it is these things that bring me to myself. I was charmed again to hear Martillac speak of Avignon, and your answers to the speeches. Good God, daughter, what do you say? do you think the King or the Province will give any thing to my son for maintaining and instructing the nobility? nothing at all, I assure you, the honour is sufficient.

Do not be uneasy about the letter you wrote to Madame Descartes; she admires it in secret, like a person of sense, and who is acquainted with the consequences of such a confidence; I answer for it that she will never speak of it but to a very honest man, whom she calls her master, and who is as discreet as herself.

To the Chevalier de Grignan.

I have had a sensible pleasure, Sir, in the midst of the chagrin I felt for your bad state of health, to see your hand-writing: I thank you for this complaisance; I think you are better by hearing from you, than from the accounts of my daughter; I had still this resource left, as you say, that she is so affected at the disorders of those she loves, that she cannot speak of them but in such a manner as communicates an incredible melancholy. I am, therefore, inclined to hope that your native air, such good company, and Balaruc, will restore your health: I assure you, there are very few things in the world I wish for more. You give me real joy, in acquainting me with Madame de Grignan's good state of health; I rely very much upon what Montillac says in that respect. God preserve that poor woman, who is so amiable and so worthy of being beloved, and

may

may he grant her the fortitude necessary to support her fate, and all the ills that her tenderness occasions her.

LETTER DCCV.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday July 10, 1689.

I HAVE not received any letter from you to day, and I am therefore going to correspond with you in the air. M. de Seignelai is now at Brest; I am a little uneasy at not being able to discover the cause, for there must necessarily be one. I advise you to pay attention to all you learn from the Chevalier with regard to the great preparations of our enemies upon the Rhine. The Abbe Bigorre does not fear them, neither as to himself, who is in security, nor as to his friends; wherefore, my dear child, make yourself easy about the pretty little colonel, as you have him at your finger's end. I believe that the Chevalier, after what M. de Montegut has told him, will not dare to repeat that ridiculous expression which made us laugh, *I know a fool*; in truth, he is neither a fool nor a child; and if his former behaviour, which we thought too modest, is now tinctured with some boldness, and he habituates himself to conversation, he has now no defect; in a word, *God preserve him*, this is my usual chant. It seems, according to a letter which Rochon has written to me, that M. d'Arles has a good deal of business upon his hands. His opponents are his friends: our business has been retarded by Madame Talon, who has prevailed upon her husband in this respect at the instance of Madame de Buri; but if this delay continues much longer, M. d'Arles will complain to the King; Madame de Feluere is another adversary; if through her great friendship for Madame de Buri, she should change her sentiments in favour of her friend, this prelate will easily surmount all difficulties; honest Rochon entreats me to believe every thing will go right. I agree that M. Gui did not speak amiss to the Grand Council; but I nevertheless thought, without prejudice, that simple truth was much stronger in Rochon's discourse; and this is so certain, that if the Chevalier recollects, he can inform you that we were quite in despair not to have our cause

cause tried upon the spot, whilst it was warm ; this was a sign that we were persuaded the judges were then well disposed towards us, and that we were afraid their good wishes might abate the next day ; but God was willing to favour us with this victory, I shall not forget it, and I wish M. d'Arles as complete a one.

We continue leading the same life, and I accommodate myself better than ever I thought I should, being three or four hours all alone ; I had habituated myself so much to your agreeable company, my most amiable child, and that of my old friends, that I never thought I should be capable of writing prose ; and I am highly pleased at finding that I pen it pretty well. I have begun reading a book of piety, which is better than any thing I can produce ; it was written by one M. Hamon * of Port-Royal, who was a real saint, and who has drawn his production from the purest streams : it is a *Treatise upon perpetual Prayer*, joined to some other treatises ; what I have read of it, appears to me admirable ; the preface is very suitable, and the approbation of the three Doctors is an elogium ; when this book comes into your hands, pay it due respect ; M. de Grignan will be highly pleased with it. I conjure the Chevalier to tell me something about Paulina ; I hope he is pleased with her. How does M. de Carcassonne agree with his brother, of whom he wrote such pleasantries ? what resolution has he taken with regard to his building ? If he follows his own disposition, I am persuaded a third story will soon be erected. I cannot still refrain from laughing at the equipage the Chevalier takes with him to obtain his father's old apartments. The parterre belonging to yours, is now so handsome, so well planted, so fashionable, and so full of flowers and orange-trees, and Coulanges makes this place so agreeable, that you will not know it again. Your poor brother is always melancholy and sad at Rennes. M. and Madame de

* John Hamon, a celebrated physician, and one of the best writers of Port-Royal, who died February 22, 1687. See his eulogium and epitaph in the Necrology of Port-Royal de Champs, page 19, and continuation. Amsterdam edition, 1723.

Chaulnes are at St. Malo. I should never end, my dear girl, if I were to tell you, how much my attention is engaged upon you, and your letters, your friendship for me, and the desire I imagine you have of seeing me with you, and the consolation I have from this reflection, makes me draw near my latter end with some satisfaction; but after all, we must submit to the will of God, which we should never forget. You gave me great pleasure the other day in telling me, that you were not inclined to be jealous; how just is this confidence, and worthy of the perfect friendship I entertain for you. I conjure you not to forget paying all my compliments where due. Your sister-in-law is so far from being tired at the accounts of Avignon, that three days ago, she made me read over again *The Procession and the Jews*; she is very fond of these things, and I of every thing you relate. I tenderly embrace you and my dear Paulina. My taste exactly corresponds with yours, in respect to Esther; that was an agreeable day to me.

LETTER DCCVI.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday July 13, 1689.

I HAVE not received two packets together, as I expected. I am persuaded one has miscarried of the twenty-eighth or thirtieth of June. I should be sorry if it were lost, and particularly if in this packet I should have lost the answer which I expected from you concerning the memorial relative to M. de M. for it is impatiently expected at Rennes; I will answer for it you will not contend for any of the fine lands specified in this memorial: it appears to me that this gentleman is very rich, that he has very fine furniture, and that he is a very good worthy man; his son is handsome and well made, is he not? he has no deficiency in this respect; If I should be hard pushed as to his family, I should, like M. de Rochefoucault, *be obliged to swallow scalding peas*. If your answer be in the packet that is lost, repeat to me, as near as you can, what I have to say, lest your silence should create suspicion, like

like that of Mary-Jane of Flanders ; I imagine you have not forgot the story of du Bellai.

This rainy windy weather makes me somewhat melancholy ; it interrupts my agreeable walks ; but I find that M. Nicole will not allow us to complain of the weather. I could not live in peace, if I did not often consider Providence ; it is the consolation of the melancholy stages of life, it shortens complaints, calms pains, fixes all our thoughts ; that is to say, it should do all this ; but much is wanting to our being wise enough to avail ourselves so salutarily of this perspective, we are but too much agitated and too sensible. My opinion is, that those who seldom view it, are much more unhappy than those who endeavour to habituate themselves to it. This kind Providence, then, is going to determine our bill of review, according to its pleasure ; its will in regard to the arrest, gave me sufficient hopes as to the sequel ; the interest I take in it, is as great as my affection for you is strong ; it is the same pattern ; here indeed my resignation is not so complete as it should be ; as to every thing else it is pretty well : but, good heaven ! this part is too sensible ! when I consider in the lump the long absence to which we seem condemned, I acknowledge I tremble ; but in small parcels, that is day by day, we must submit to it for the good of our business ; for my journey hither would avail me but little, if I did not pass the winter here : I am thoroughly persuaded that Madame de Chaulnes will also remain here, and I will follow her destiny. As to you, my daughter, you imagine you can live six months out of Grignan, and six months *hidden* at Grignan ; can you call your present residence, with all the splendour which is inseparable from it, *being hid* ? I would have your son pay you a visit, and methinks I would have the Chevalier unite the two water seasons, by passing a winter in Provence, do you think I am wrong ? would not a return in autumn spoil all he had been doing ? should he not give up one year to the hope of a cure whilst he is there ? In a word, my belle, I speak in the clouds, according to my confined intellects ;

lects ; I cannot have a bad opinion of Balaruc, after what I have heard the Capuchins say. It is true that the journey is long, that is a misfortune ; but how many patients go much farther ? You frighten me with your eldest daughter's sore throat, it is a disorder I dread the most of any ; you say she will not soon get over it, which makes me extremely pensive. You have been very much heated at Avignon, you had no sleep ; this is an excellent life for causing an inflammation in the throat. Take care of your balsam, it is an infallible remedy ; I have told you the effect it had upon Madame de Chaulnes, she could not swallow any thing in the world ; never be without this precious balsam, I conjure you. Paulina's disorder is very strange, the poor child must look sadly, you must endeavour to cure her. I find amazing virtues in your waters of Vals, which are equally good for contrary disorders ; if experience were not in favour of these waters, I should think them worthy of a place in Moliere's comedy of the Physicians. You give me a very agreeable idea of the manner in which you pass your time, what excellent company ! you have even the pleasure of not being tempted to quit those beautiful terrasses, this is a happiness for gouty folks ; they cannot reproach themselves with diverting you from your walks, they see it is not possible to be happier with them in every respect. How can your days seem more than instants, since they even glide in our *Thebaide* ? How goes Carcassonne's taciturnity ? what has he at length produced ? what has he pronounced ? if he has listened to the north-wind, he must have decided, it does not explain itself in ambiguous terms, and its voice should go before all others. I am unacquainted with that terrass, to which you constantly resort, it must be very convenient, as it is sheltered from the north-wind. All your prospects are admirable, I am acquainted with that of Mount Ventoux ; I am very fond of these amphitheatres, and am persuaded, like yourself, that if heaven should be curious to view our spectacles, its inhabitants would choose no other spot to see them from conveniently, and at the same time you would doubt

doubtless enjoy the most magnificent spectacle in the world.

My son is gone to St. Malo's, to pay M. and Madame de Chaulnes a very short visit ; he is with M. de Pomimereuil, and will return to Rennes. We are in hopes that all this Nobility will soon be dismissed ; in case of necessity they can be called together in the twinkling of an eye. My son desired me the other day, to say a thousand kind things to you from him, as I have done from you ; his wife is very sorry that you should leave your fine orange-trees at Avignon to the mercy of the winds, and that you should say you did not care about them ; what an expression ! she begs their life at your hands, and that you will take care of them, or else to send them to her, and she will preserve them from all dangerous blasts. I told you that we were entirely surrounded with orange-flowers, little jessamins, and all kinds of other flowers. I ask your pardon, my dear belle, for such a long insignificant scrawl, my leisure is very dangerous for you. The Chevalier will laugh at me, and not without reason.

LETTER DCCVII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday July 17, 1689.

I HAVE at length received the answer concerning M—'s fortune ; it is, indeed, a little too sincere. If such accounts were always given in, when marriages were upon the carpet, many that do would never take place. Debts in abundance, lands subject to taxation, mortgaged plate ; good heaven, what a fortune ! But what is become of all those fine goods, those large coal-scuttles, those plates, that fine buffet, and all that we saw at M— ? I imagine it was an illusion, and I find I was not mistaken : the situation of M—'s affairs smell strong of the times, like those of every one.

It gives me pleasure to imagine the life you lead, my dear Countess ; I make my very woods rejoice at it. What charming company, what fine fun !

how easy it is to sing with such a happy set, *the north-wind blows, why then let it blow.* You would bear more patiently the continuation of our rains; but they have ceased, and I have resumed my solitary but agreeable walks. What do you say, my child? would you not let me have two or three hours to myself, after having been at mass, to dinner, and till five o'clock working, or talking with my daughter-in-law? she would, I believe, be as much displeased at this as myself: she is a very pretty woman, and we are very well together; but we have a great taste for this liberty, and to meet afterwards. When I am with you, my daughter, I never leave you without chagrin, from my regard for you; with respect to every one else, it is through regard for myself. Nothing can be more just, or more natural, there are no other two persons who can stand in the same predicament as we do; wherefore leave us a little to our holy liberty, it agrees with me, and by the help of books the time passes, in this way, as quick as it does at your brilliant castle. I pity those who do not love to read, your son is hitherto amongst this number; but I hope, like you, that when he discovers the fatal effects of ignorance, particularly to a soldier, who hath so much to read of others glorious actions, he will be inclined to have an acquaintance with them, and will remove this imperfection. I am also of opinion, that by reading, we learn to write; I know some general officers, whose stile does not rise above the vulgar; it is, nevertheless, very pretty to be able to communicate one's thoughts with elegance; but it also happens sometimes that these people write as they think, and as they speak, and then a general harmony reigns throughout. I believe the Marquis will write well; I have long since wished he would pay you a visit in November, and as he will then be eighteen years old, you should think of marrying him off hand, and when he has provided himself an heir or two, let him return; but do not amuse yourself about Mademoiselle d'Or—; her father is nothing but a trifler, whose stile and want of resolution put me in a passion. It should seem

seem to me that the air and manner of life at Grignan, would restore the Chevalier's health; he is surrounded with the best company he can wish for, without being interrupted by those cruel visits, those swarms of caterpillars, which gave him the gout; no cold, but a north-wind that may be called his *natal air* not to terrify him; in a word, I do not comprehend the obstinacy and gloominess of his vapours, in opposition to so many good things; nevertheless, it is but too true, that he is tormented with them. I am charmed to think Paulina pleases him; I am persuaded that she would please me too; there is a kind of cordiality in her countenance and pretty eyes; ah, how sweet they are! methinks I see them. And as to her humour, I will wager that she is corrected of it, nothing more is necessary to effect this, than your kindness towards her, and her desire of pleasing you: but it is quite risible to suppose that this child should be perfect upon her leaving Aubenas; I tenderly embrace her. I weep to think that M. de Carcassonne should sit again with his arms across. Ah! my dear handsome Lord, another little effort, do not cross them so soon, perfect your work, observe how stupendous is that of M. d'Arles, how high, great, and perfect; would you yield to him this honour, and leave this part of the castle of your illustrious forefathers quite imperfect, in ruins, exposed to the north-wind, uninhabitable, and very inconvenient to your elder brother, depriving him of affording a stranger a lodging, or even his servants? do I say right? Ah! my dear Lord! take courage, do not leave this blemish upon your reputation, nor this advantage to M. d'Arles, who, in the midst of his small debts, was nevertheless willing to crown the undertaking. If M. de la Garde would support, and assist me to bring this matter to bear, methinks I should not lose any reputation upon the occasion; but I do not know how I am with the Prelate, so I hold my tongue. You do me a real pleasure in telling me I am sometimes wished for by the Grignans; that eldest, who writes so well, will he not say a word to his little sister-in-law?

LETTER DCCVIII.

To the Same.

Rennes, Wednesday July 20, 1689.

THIS date surprises you, my dear child, as well as myself; for I did not expect to sally forth so soon from the Rocks, where I found myself very well; it is true that this excursion is only for a few days; but M. and Madame de Chaulnes have entreated me so earnestly and so cordially to come and see them here, whither they are come to be spectators of my son at the head of the Nobility, and the Colonel's lady being also invited, as you may think, we came the next day, which was yesterday, and found my son here. I am perfectly well accommodated at the Marchioness de Marbeuf's; we expect those two good Governors here to-night, and to-morrow I shall complete my letter, and will tell you some news from Brest. I shall now speak to you of the fine painting of *Albane*, which you give me of this little Rochebonne; for it is precisely such, methinks I see him, and I thank Madame de Rochebonne for having obliged you to give me this portrait; he is charming, and has delighted my imagination, methinks he is a sample of those three boys at Paris; in fine, these are very pretty productions, it would be very consolatory to produce a dozen, when only one or two should be according to this model; were he a girl, *she would set the world on fire*, as Treville says in speaking of your charms: but this boy has really too much wit, all his little thoughts and reasonings, his finesses, his natural juvenile rhetoric, are quite out of the common road; I am not in the least astonished that after having scolded him, you should love him to a degree of being ready almost to devour him; for a little angel, like him, will excite such emotions.

But let us speak of that *wisdom* * which appears to me a *mou'ting* rage and madness; it has its source in a silent phrenzy, like a dog, that sometimes at the highest pitch of madness, seems very quiet: this is just

* By this Madame de Sevigne means M. de la Gardé.

just the case with him ; who would not think that every thing was serene within ? who would not think that he delighted to follow his first thoughts, and that they were daily strengthened by merit, and even by the sequel of what might happen ? what a perspective ! what a consolation to bequeath thus his estate ! I ask modesty's pardon, but there are two lines of *Polyeuctes* * that I cannot suppress,

*Aux mains du plus vaillant & du plus honnête homme,
Qu'aït adoré la terre, & qu'aït vu naître Rome !*

“ To the hands of the most valiant and most honest man that ever adored the earth, or saw Rome's walls first rise.”

What joy must it be to have such heirs † ! how just, and in what a house does he cast away the off-spring ! In a word, my daughter, I am lost, what then is wisdom ? what is friendship ? have we ever seen them under such figures ? it is said he is fond of his castle, but I cannot believe it ; neither do I believe that he loves the Chevalier ; without it be, as you say, he loves the Chevalier like his castle, and that he loves neither, but what does he love ? this is such a monstrous thought, that I am a thousand leagues from it ; acquaint me with the sequel, will it not vanish like the marriage † ? As to me, I do not believe there is any man bold enough to think of purchasing this estate : but I shall never finish. I shall only say two words more to you about the dispute arisen among you. It

* Corneille's Poly. Act IV. Scene IV.

† Madame de Sevigne here means the Chevalier de Grignan, and all the Grignans. The estate of la Garde devolved from Lewis Adhemar de Monteil, Baron of Grignan. See Father Anselme, vol. vii. page 930, Edition of 1733.

‡ We have already seen that the marriage of M. de la Garde (Anthony Escalin des Aimars) did not take place. Madame Sevigne hopes the sale of the Marquise de la Garde will turn out the same, which was the case. This estate at present belongs to Madame de Castelane, grand-daughter to Paulina de Grignan, Marchioness de Simiane, sole legatee to M. de la Garde, (her uncle according to the custom in Britanny) who died in 1713.

seems

seems to me that you are with a dozen Countesses de Fiesque ; you know they never considered small estates, where nothing grew but corn, and they thought they had done a charming thing, in exchanging it quickly for silver looking glasses, and such like baubles. Such is your disposition, Messieurs de la Balustrade, this comparison will decide it, and I shall not exhaust my simple right reason, to persuade you that gold is more valuable than quicksilver, and that Madame de Sarson, who is a good farmer, is more solid than a butterfly ; I cannot have a better opportunity to discontinue writing. I am going to visit the good Chaulnes's.

M. de Pommereuil is just gone away, he has intrusted me so well with regard to the affairs of Brest, that though you may know as much as myself, I cannot refrain repeating to you what he has told me. The Marshal d'Estrees was gone on board his ship, all his orders given, and every thing embarked, when he received an order from the King to return to Brest, and to remain there, on account of the importance of the place, and the necessity of his presence. M. de Seignelai is embarked, he is intrusted with the execution of this grand affair. Chateaurenau * is with him ; they expect the Chevalier de Tourville †, who is to join them, and whose fleet will compose the sixty ships which constitute our power ; but there are upwards of sixty ships, Dutch and English, in an island named Ushant, eight leagues from Belleisle, which will prevent this junction ; you judge very right, my daughter, of the importance of this affair. M. de Seignelai appears to me like Bacchus, young and happy, who is going to conquer the Indies. It is said the Pope is very much out of order. M. de Lavardin is arrived at Paris, he is afraid to return ; and as to me, I have my fears too, but they are of another kind.

* Francis-Lewis Rousselet, Count of Chateaurenau, since Vice-Admiral and Marshal of France.

† Ann-Hilarion du Cotentin, Chevalier, and afterwards Count de Tourville, Vice-Admiral and Marshal of France.

kind ¹. We should be prepared for all events; God gives and takes away at pleasure.

Thursday.

Those good Governors received me with open arms; we supped yesterday at M. de Pommereuil's with some women, Revel, and others; we are to dine there again to-day, according to the regulation of the King's Commissary; Madame de Chaulnes calls this an arret of council from above. She has spoke to me about you, and says you are not willing that I should be at the Rocks; you may nevertheless believe that, except in winter, nothing is so agreeable or good for my health; I am here quite unhinged with noise and company. I was very willing to visit the Chaulnes's for a few days; and I shall always repeat it with pleasure, but nothing can support me except the hope of returning to my tranquil scenes. This noise can never please me, but appears to me like that of the hotel de Carnavalet, or that of the castle of Grignan, if I am ever happy enough to hear it; for I will acknowledge this last I passionately wish for. This Duchess says a thousand kind things to you. M. de Chaulnes has said a number of pleasant things to me, and such as they are, good or bad, I conjure you to answer them: you love me too much not to assist me in paying those who have so much friendship for me. M. de Chaulnes has really much at heart what he mentions to you, *a journey to Rome, to Grignan, to the King of Spain*—I was so warm I did not hear half what he said. He will not dismiss the Nobility so soon as was expected, he has received orders to let them remain still on foot, without their being of any utility; I saw them yesterday formed into squadrons, they make a very good appearance. My son is much harassed with them, he has not time to write to you, he returns you a thousand friendly acknowledgments for your remembrance of him. I do not lose sight of my

¹ We know the reason why Madame de Sevigne was apprehensive of the restitution of the county of Venaslin.

dear Countess, her castle, or its inhabitants ; pay them all my compliments, according to the friendship they entertain for me ; you know how to vary the phraseology ; but I conjure you to embrace my dear Paulina, I frequently allure her with these kind of graces ; love her upon my recommendation. I am entirely yours, my dear child, this is a compliment without exaggeration, and such would be all I could say upon my affection towards you : the instruction you give me upon this head, makes me too sensible to think that certain people love others, when I discover consequences that nearly resemble hatred.

I have spoken in confidence to Madame de Marbeuf relative to this memorial, and she, with reason, thinks the measure a good one.

LETTER DCCIX.

To the Same.

Rennes, Sunday July 24, 1689.

IT was said here that the Pope was dead, and that M. de Lavardin was only changing linen for his return : but the Abbe Bigorre will not allow this report to gain ground ; he positively says he is not dead. This most lucky country is the gift and bounty of Providence to you, and which excites my gratitude. You make a very good use of it, but you are at length turned economist, and this will make you a gainer. As to my affairs of Nantes, I give proper orders, and they take their own way ; I shall set the Abbe Charier to work at a proper time ; the chief thing is, I spend but very little, and I send small bills of exchange to Paris, which are immediately devoured. If I remain a little time in this country I shall be able to breathe, which is more than I did before. I should be very sorry, my dear child, of being capable of desiring these things, only to save money ; I should think avarice was my predominant disposition ; but I am very safe against this vile passion ; I have more reason to think that I am a complete votary to the love of justice ; so I pursue my track, without fear or shame,

in pursuit of that holy œconomy, which meets with your approbation; it has not left me any room to doubt of its being my actuating principle—I have been but too short a time in this parsimonious clime.

I cannot tell you with what joy and friendship these good Governors received me, and how they acknowledged the favour of my coming from the Rocks to visit them. M. de Chaulnes has reviewed the Nobility, this is a fine regiment, and tolerably well disciplined. My son received the compliments upon this occasion in a manner that gave me pleasure; whilst I could not help reflecting that I had not educated him, and launched him into life and fortune for that station; but then Providence immediately occurred to me, for without this, we should never end our retrospective views; it would be an endless skein; here it is we meet with fortitude, God preserve me from any thing that may overthrow so salutary a philosophy. Apropos, I had the other day a visit from three pretty women, these are Descartes's grand nieces: their aunt had not said a word to them concerning your letter, this may convince you of her discretion. They related to me a thousand things they had heard about their uncle, which will divert you; but I keep this for the Rocks. There is here one M. de Ganges, who adores M. de Grignan, so that he must be my friend; his regiment is in this country; I really wish you would tell me what sort of a being is a man of Languedoc here, who knows all the Grignans, and who is the Count's particular friend.

The son of the Seneschal of Rennes, who was so wild, and has had so many adventures, danced the other day; he is a perfect model for a sculptor, twenty years of age, and has taken a wife in a hurry, who is the daughter of the President a Mortier of this country, because the first thing she did after seeing him was being pregnant; so she was married, and brought to bed six weeks after. She is here, and fancies that provided her husband is seen, she cannot be blamed; it is true that whilst he is dancing, no one can help being of his wife's opinion. Image to yourself a man

completely well made, with a romantic countenance, dancing with a most noble air, like Pecour, Favier, or St. Andre *, all these masters having told him, "Sir, we can teach you nothing, you know more than we do." He danced those fine dances, which the Spaniards are so fond of; but particularly the pas-siepieds with his wife in such perfection and regularity, as no words can describe: no formal steps, nothing but just cadences, with fancied attitudes, some masterly flourishes, and then the simple minuet step, at one time reposing, and then with his feet in the air: I assure you, daughter, and you, who are a *connoisseur*, would have been highly diverted with the harmony of this kind of ball. Madame de Chaulnes, who was a fine dancer in her time, was quite beyond herself, and said she had never seen any thing like it. A man of great wit sat next to me, and we both said all we could to justify the girl, in applauding her husband's perfection in dancing.

Have you, my dear child, perfectly understood the cause of the Marshal d'Estrees's disgust, who had reached Conquet †? M. de Seignelai has supplanted him, and the Marshal has returned to Brest. There are sixty-eight of the enemy's ships at the Isle of Ushant. We expect the Chevalier de Tourville, who is to join M. de Seignelai, and then our fleet will consist of sixty-eight ships. It is thought that the wind which brings in the ships from the last, will be against those that are in this island; so that we always wish our master success. Monsieur and Madame de Chaulnes desire to be remembered to you in the most friendly manner. I sometimes fancy myself with you at Avignon; two great tables twice a day, and basset, that cannot be dispensed with. The country is somewhat different; Madame de Chaulnes has been at Avignon, and she was as fond of it as you are; she would not leave it, she was received there as an Ambassadress, she enters into all the charms of this residence, God preserve it for you.

We

* Three of the most celebrated opera dancers of that time.

† A small maritime town in Britanny, five leagues from Brest, with a good port and a good road.

We shall all leave one another in three or four days, which should please you : this life is too troublesome, they make too much fuss about me, there is no being alone, this is killing : all who go to Madame de Chaulnes's come here ; there is no having a moment to myself, this provokes me : do not desire them to make me leave my solitude, I should be extremely ill to continue this life for any time. The Rocks are peaceable, and very fit to preserve your dear mother, in order to see you again : here we are overwhelmed. The regiment of *Nobility* is still assembled ; so that my son cannot return with us. I could not help thinking with *Baptiste*, in an air he made for the opera, and which was sung at mass, when I saw him look so handsome at the head of the squadrons, " Lord, " I ask your pardon, he was not made for you—Gentlemen of the rear-guard, I did not make him for " you." You have said nothing to me about the Chevalier's health, it was he who told me this little story of *Baptiste*. Adieu, my daughter, you know how much I love you ; Good heaven, what a simple common expression to explain something so rare and uncommon !

LETTER DCCX.

To the Same.

Rennes, Monday July 25, 1689.

I SHALL set out to-morrow at day-break with M. and Madame de Chaulnes, to make a tour for a fortnight ; this is the manner in which it took place. M. de Chaulnes said to me the other day, " Madame, you should come with us to Vannes, and see the first President ; he has paid you civilities ever since you have been in the Province ; it is a kind of duty we owe to a woman of quality." I told him I did not understand him, adding, " Sir, I have the most earnest desire of going to the Rocks, to be in a state of repose, which is absolutely necessary after leaving this place, and which you alone could have induced me to quit." Here things rested. The next day Madame de Chaulnes said to me in a low voice at table ; " My dear *Gouvernante*, you should come with us, there is but

one stage between here and Vannes, we sometimes stand in need of the Parliament. We shall afterwards go to Auray, which is only three leagues distant ; we shall not be troubled with company, and we shall return in a fortnight :" I answered somewhat too artlessly, " Madam, you have no occasion for me, it is only your goodness ; I know of nothing that obliges me to keep ~~in~~ with these gentlemen ; I will retire to my solitude, which I really stand in need of." Madame de Chaulnes retired somewhat coolly ; it immediately struck me, why should I refuse people to whom I am indebted for every kind of friendship and complaisance ? I make use of their coach and servants when it is convenient for me ; and I refuse to go with them a little journey, in which perhaps they would be glad of my company : it is their choice, they ask me with great complaisance, timidity, and decency ; and I, though in perfect health, and without any substantial reason, refuse them, at the very time we are desirous of having the deputation for my son, and of which M. de Chaulnes will probably have the disposal this year : all this had a quick revolution in my head, I found I did not do right. After I had thus reproached myself, I said to her, " Madame, my first thoughts only regarded myself, I had but very little inclination to go and see M. de la Faluere * ; but is it possible that you could wish it for yourself, and it could give you the least pleasure ?" She blushed, and said to me with an air of truth, " You may judge." " This, Madam, I said, is enough, there needs no more, I assure you, I will go with you." She let me see she was highly pleased, embraced me, and left the table, saying to M. de Chaulnes, she will go with us. She refused me, said M. de Chaulnes, but I was in hopes she would not refuse you. In a word, my daughter, I go, and I am persuaded that I do right, agreeable to the gratitude I owe them for their continual friendship, and according to sound policy ; you yourself would have advised me to it.

Monsieur

* First President of the Parliament of Britanny.

Monsieur de Sevigne.

Nothing is so true, my dear little sister. Madame de Chaulnes was shocked at my mother's refusal; she was silent, coloured, and leaned upon her hand; and when my mother had made her reflections, and said she was ready to go, if it were agreeable to her, she expressed such real native joy, as would have affected you. I did not know what had passed, but I was acquainted with it a short time after; and abstracted from their patronage in my favour this year, if it be in their power to shew it, it was impossible to lay aside this complaisance, without being at the same time wanting in all the duties of friendship and decency; so that I beg you will heartily thank them, as I have done. Madame de Chaulnes is so careful of her health, that we may be perfectly easy.

Madame de Sevigne.

I have just received yours of the 16th; it is too agreeable, clever, and complaisant. I laughed, all alone, at your masons and workmen's embarrassment. I am very fond of the liberty, and even licentiousness of your life and repasts, and am pleased, that the stroke of a mallet should not be your master. Good heaven, how happy should I be for a while to lead such a life in such company! nothing can, however, deprive me of the hopes of being with you one of these days. As this measure depends upon God, I implore him to let it take place, and hope he will hear my prayers. I never should have thought that butter would have been an article in your expences, I thought this would only have been the case in Britanny. But I shall never forget the reason why you should eat as much as they please, because you are not hungry. *I shall eat as much as they please, for I have no more appetite;* I am obliged to you for this phrase, I can assure you that I am quite tired of great entertainments; *I would eat as much as they please, if there were nothing to eat.* This is the phrase I return you. Alas! I am very distant from the melancholy and solitude of twilight; *I only*

I only wish for it again ; I do nothing but upon motives of reason and policy. This is an invention for passing my time with that kind of languor, as will prolong my days more than usual ; it is God's will. I will preserve my health as much as I can ; I am charmed with the perfect state of yours, and of the improvement in the Chevalier's. My dear child, I embrace you, and bid you adieu. We were not yet at a sufficient distance. See *Aurai* upon the map.

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